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## BAPTIST HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE forty-seventh anniversary of this society was held at Finsbury chapel, on Monday evening, April 22, when there was a more numerous attendance than on any previous occasion. C. B. ROBINSON, Esq., took the chair. The service having been commenced by singing, Mr Tyso, of Wallingford, engaged in prayer.

The CHAIRMAN said:—Of the many scenes of Christian benevolence which at the present day appeal to your sympathy and aid, there is no one, I venture to say, more entitled to attention than that which has convened us together this evening. Brought, by the good providence of God, to the forty-seventh anniversary, the friends to the Baptist Home Missionary society may well thank God and take courage. Although at every period of its history it has received more or less intimations of the Divine favour, yet in no one year has the blessing of God been more abundantly bestowed on its labours and operations than during that which has just closed. You have seventy-two agents in different parts of the kingdom, who, with the assistance of their brethren, are in the habit of preaching in 500 villages and towns. There have been added to the churches under their care no less than 800 persons during the year that has terminated. You have, in connexion with these various places, 86 Sunday schools, employing 1,000 teachers, and containing nearly 6,000 scholars. Your agents are accustomed to preach on an average to 20,000, with your brethren every week. Enlarged, however, as has been the sphere of your operations during the past and every year of your progress, but especially the last, there remains much ground to be possessed, and I hope the cheering statements made will only serve to incite you to increased zeal in this noble cause; for surely it may truly be said that the dark places of our own native land are still full of the habitations of cruelty. I hope that by the enlarged spirit of liberality evinced towards this society and kindred institutions, that the time is not very far distant when from every hamlet in our land will be heard the exclamation, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace;" and sure I am, everything at the present day should excite you to increased exertions. Error is stalking abroad on every hand, whether it be popery in the shape of Puseyism, or open infidelity. The great educational movement itself, the glory of our times, renders more necessary the operations of the society. You are creating a thirst for knowledge throughout the land: how necessary it is that you should carry with you agents to cry out, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." If our meeting this evening has no other good tendency—but I hope it will have many—I do most earnestly desire that the agents of your society may receive your cordial sympathy and support; they are engaged throughout the year in a laborious task—they look to you to be encouraged. On an occasion like this, you should hold up their hands, and strengthen their hearts; they have gone forth for his name's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We should be fellow labourers with them. I do hope their hearts will be encouraged by seeing the cordial support you give to the objects of the meeting. Without further detail, I shall call on the Secretary to read so much of the report as he feels will be interesting to the meeting.

Mr S. J. DAVIS then read that document, which commenced by bringing under review the operations of the Society in the agricultural counties in the northern and eastern parts of the kingdom. In many instances the missionaries had had to contend with the prevalence of an intolerant spirit. In Sussex, Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, constituting the first section, there were twelve principal, and thirty-two subordinate stations. There were several interesting communications from Devonshire. The stations in Wiltshire were in a healthy state. In the *Quarterly Register* of January last a letter was inserted from Mr Alcock, of Berwick, near Shaftesbury, containing an affecting appeal on behalf of the poor, to which several friends had benevolently responded. In the second section, comprising the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Kent, East, Essex, Cambridge-shire, Suffolk, and Norwich, the principal stations were 30; the subordinate 66. The communications from the agents were, upon the whole, encouraging. In the midland and adjacent counties there were 22 principal and 39 subordinate stations. In the mining and manufacturing districts there were 15 principal and 84 subordinate stations. During the past year, Mr Pulsford, the evangelist, had been incessantly engaged in his exhausting labours. At Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, he had been favoured with the largest amount of blessing. Upwards of twenty missionary churches have adopted the class system, but so recently as not to be able to pronounce an

opinion respecting its practicability and worth; but a letter had been received from Mr Roe, of Birmingham, who gave a very favourable account of its operation. The committee felt that something must be done without delay upon the subject of general education, and implored the stronger churches to help the work. In the report of last year, the committee recommended the plan of simultaneous district collections, to be made either by each minister, in his own church, or by an exchange of neighbouring brethren. The plan had been tried in six counties: in two of them, the result had been by no means discouraging; in the remaining four, it had worked admirably. For several years past, legacies had been received, amounting to £400 per annum; but this year, only £160 had been derived by that source; £250, therefore, had been borrowed to make up the deficiencies, which, added to the balance of last year, left a debt of £831 6s. 3d.

Mr J. J. DAVIES (of Tottenham) rose to move:—

"That this meeting cordially adopts the report of the proceedings of the Society, an abstract of which has just been read; that it sympathises with the agents, especially in the rural districts, under the opposition which they have to encounter; and that it acknowledges with devout and fervent gratitude the cheering tokens of the divine approbation, which have attended their labours during the past year."

The report cannot have been listened to without feelings of great interest; the interest, however, is, in many respects, of a very mixed kind; it is deeply affecting to think, that in our own country, and about the middle of the 19th century, there should be thousands of persons calling themselves ministers of the gospel of Christ, who seem to live only for the purpose of disseminating a religious system which tends completely to subvert the great scheme of redemption through Christ Jesus—a system essentially one with that which the great apostle of the Gentiles designated as another gospel. It is still more mournful to think that there are tens of thousands of our countrymen committed to the direction of these blind guides, whose spiritual interests are thus deliberately, though, it may be, unwillingly, sacrificed to this system of delusion. It is scarcely possible to calculate the amount of evil which this system involves, or the amount of good, in various ways, which it prevents. Perhaps, indeed, there is not one thing which tends more directly and powerfully to oppose the progress of evangelical truth in this country, than the persuasion which is fostered in the public mind, from the cradle to the grave, that they are Christians already. It is to little purpose that ministers and missionaries exhort our countrymen as sinners—that they tell them of the demerit of sin, and of the consequences of transgression. They are not sinners, they have been made Christians—Christians by act of parliament, and Christians by the application of holy water, applied by duly consecrated hands. Indeed, I do not know whether a system of religion so utterly subversive of the gospel—a system at once so subtle and refined, and at the same time equally false, be not a more serious obstruction to the progress of evangelical truth, than the depravity of our common nature [hear, hear]. There is something in the gospel wondrously adapted to the wants and moral diseases of our fallen humanity; but when men are from day to day persuaded that another remedy has been provided, that another remedy has been applied, and that they are saved already, there is every possible inducement at once and for ever to reject the gospel of Christ: and it matters not by what name such a system is designated [hear, hear]. A rose will smell as sweetly call it by what name you please, and poison will act as deleteriously, disguise it how you may. It is striking to remark the essential identity which almost every system of false religion which has obtained among men, presents. Strange as the remark may appear, yet I will venture to make it here to-night, that the ancient Pharisaism and Gentilism, that Brahminism and Romanism, that system of it which threatens to destroy all that is vital in the land, these systems are essentially one and the same. In appearance they may differ very much. Great are the diversities in the notions of their respective advocates; great the diversities in the forms to which they attend, but essentially, fundamentally, these systems are identical. They are identical in that point in which they are all alike opposed to the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are all criminal. According to them, piety has little connexion with moral worth; according to them, piety has little to do with the illumination of the mind, with the uprightness of the heart before God. It has very little to do with the state of feeling and of sentiment being in harmony with the Divine mind, but it consists in some external observances, mere bodily exercise by the ministry of a duly authorised and appointed order of men. Would that in our own country, the great but simple truth were thoroughly understood, that religion is in its nature simply and entirely spiritual; would that throughout all the schools and sanctuaries of the land, it were loudly and earnestly proclaimed that religion

consists in a right state of heart and mind towards God; would that it were published everywhere, that religion is something spiritual, something vital, something which allies the soul to its Maker, and introduces it to a state of intercourse with its divine Father. Religion has its seat in the heart; it is with the inmost soul of man that it has especially to do; and it respects outward forms and observances, even when of divine appointment, only so far as they serve fitly to embody the expression of inward feeling and inward principle. A very important sentiment, I humbly conceive this to be, and very extensive, moreover, in its bearing. Religion is a state of hallowed intercourse between an enlightened, purified mind, and the Spirit of God; of intercommunion between renewed hearts and the searcher of all hearts. That which you see at the domestic altar, even at the most hallowed moments, when every one who bows the knee there contributes his portion to the common censor, whence ascends a cloud of sweet and holy incense, fragrant, even to Heaven itself: that which you see in the sanctuary, in the most solemn and delightful hour, when those who have given their hearts to the Lord and to each other, sit down to commemorate the dying love of their exalted Master—to express their oneness with each other, and their oneness with him; that which you see is not religion itself—it is but the indication of its presence, but the symbol of inward and invisible grace [cheers]. Thus, even divine ordinances are not religion; they are but the means which God himself has appointed to indicate its existence, and to increase its strength. Even divine ordinances are not a means of grace to any, apart from the exercise of intelligence and holy affection [hear]. Ordinances cannot be really beneficial to any man, further than he enters into them in the exercise of right feeling and of right views. Would to heaven that this simple and great truth were thoroughly understood through our own land [hear, hear]. It would send a crowd of false notions, like spectres, to the regions of forgetfulness. We should then hear no more of such absurdities, such anomalies, in connexion with Christianity, as a sacerdotal order, a priesthood without a sacrifice—an order of priests, where all are a spiritual priesthood [hear, hear]. We should hear no more of such an absurdity as apostolical succession—the true successor of the apostles, be he where he may, is the man that has the apostolic spirit, and none other [cheers]. We should hear no more of the vagary of baptismal regeneration. Why, regenerate an infant incapable of intelligence and of action! regenerate one who cannot think and feel, and happily, in this case, one that has not sinned [hear, hear]! We should hear no longer of such an absurdity as sacramental efficacy, of holy vestments, and holy things, and a number of other like absurdities [hear, hear]. Most consolatory it is that the great truths of the gospel are understood and advocated by all the agents of your society, wherever they may be found. It is a matter of devout thanksgiving, indeed, that the labours of these holy men are crowned with increasing success. The results of the past year are truly delightful. In connexion with your various associations there are rather under 4,000 members; but upwards 800 of these have been added during the past year [cheers]. This is the work of God, and it demands our devoutest thanksgiving. Thus, while your missionaries are misunderstood and misrepresented by many—while they have to bear up amidst difficulty, to struggle on amidst annoyances of various kinds, and opposition in many respects, and under which they are scarcely objects of compassion or interest, yet amidst all this they work on, and the God of missions works with them, by effecting the greatest of all miracles, the renovation of the heart of man [cheers]. We rejoice in the success of the society, because it seems to establish the close and important connexion between means and end, in the spiritual as well as in the natural economy. I would that this principle were thoroughly acted upon. I should like to know how much—our friend the Secretary might be able to tell us—of the success of the past year is to be attributed to the continuance of the aggressive, untiring labours of men like your devoted evangelist Pulsford—men who, wherever they go, cease not to stir up the whole church to an onward activity and prayerfulness; while, at the same time, they cease not to press on the consciences of sinners the necessity of an unreserved and entire submission to God. We are not straitened in our God; the gospel is just what it was in the apostolic age, distinguished by its wondrous suitableness to the wants and woes of our fallen nature; and the Spirit of all grace is just what it was at that time. The hearts of men are no worse now than they were then, and he who vanquished thousands in that age can vanquish thousands still [cheers]. But we are straitened in ourselves; we are greatly wanting in our own cause; we want the whole church, at home as well as abroad, to be raised up from its slumbers, and devoted to the great work to which she is called. We want every



Christian to feel that he is a soldier of the cross; that the humblest can do something for Christ; and that it is his honour and his duty to do whatever he can [hear, hear]. May I be allowed to say, we want something of the spirit of the Jamaica churches in our churches at home, where all the members feel that religion is their work and business, the service of Christ their constant employment, and their highest delight? We want renewed energy and zeal, on account of the state of the present times. Wondrous times are passing over us; we may talk of political changes, and desire them; but we want one change above all others, the imbuing of the public mind with the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. No change will meet the wants of our own country, our own days, except this great and divine change be effected. Strange times, indeed, when a large section of professing Christians, avowedly the only Christians, or very nearly so, are assuming an unwonted attitude, and giving utterance to sentiments so hostile to liberty and so subversive to religion; when men can silence the living oracles of God, and bid us listen to the confused and jarring notes of a vain tradition; when men can preach the doctrine of a reserve upon the vital truths of the gospel, and urge, instead, fasts and ceremonies, and confession to priests, and mystic rites; when they can withhold the children's bread, the bread which came down from heaven, and was given for the life of the world, and, instead of this, present but stones and husks, or the apples of Sodom; when men can tell us, that they blush for the reformers—that they denounce the reformation, and discard the name of protestant; when men can dethrone the Redeemer, cast him down from his eminence, and place in his stead some anomalous thing, which they call the church, but the head and tail of which is the priest—when these things are going on, it is time that all Christians should be aroused from their lethargy, and be prepared, not only to maintain their liberty and religion, but to perpetuate them, and hand them down to their posterity [loud cheers].

Mr G. H. DAVIS (of Bristol), in seconding the resolution, said:—It is sometimes difficult to speak in praise of any institution, without appearing to speak comparatively, and to insinuate, at least, the depreciation of some kindred institution. I trust that nothing that falls from me this evening, in pressing the claims of the home mission on the churches, may be misinterpreted, that I may not be supposed to exalt these claims unduly above either our Irish or our foreign missions. We sometimes hear, with lamentation, that so much is done for distant lands, and comparatively so little for home; and we fear that when the country learns that the Home Missionary society is now £800 in debt, that that lamentation may be, in some quarters, renewed—but in it we can have no sympathy. We believe the foreign mission to be the glory of our churches; we believe it will be a day unhappy for the interests of the world abroad—unhappy for Christian communities at home—when the claims of the foreign missions shall be put in the second place, even when compared with those of home itself [hear, hear]. We do not believe that the churches do attend to foreign claims rather than to their own land. We must remember that every church is itself a Home Missionary society [hear, hear]. It cannot be a selfish body; it must desire its own enlargement, which is, in other words, desiring the conversion of its home population, and, therefore, I think it is but fair, when we compare the sums expended upon a distant soil with those expended on our own, that we should take into consideration all that the churches furnish for the extension of the gospel of Christ in connexion with themselves, and in their own immediate neighbourhoods, and then, I believe, we shall come to the conclusion that the churches of this country do not attend to distant lands while they neglect their home population [hear, hear]. Thus I believe it should be—home must have the first claim upon the Christian. Though the apostle Paul received a commission to preach to the Gentile world, yet he did not forget Israel. Whosoever he went, his heart's desire and his prayer to God for his countrymen was that they might be saved; and in this sentiment we are persuaded that every missionary that leaves our shores cordially unites. Though his proper business may be with the Indian, or the negro, still he remembers the Zion of his father-land, and is solicitous for its establishment and extension. And how much more should we enter into this sentiment whose lot is cast here! We look upon our own countrymen; we admire their energy, their extended commerce, their spirit impatient of all tyranny; but we feel that these things will profit them nothing in the last great day of account without the knowledge of Him whom to know is life eternal, and therefore it is that we are not satisfied with the high position to which we have advanced as a civilised community. We desire to Christianise the whole land; and we send our missionaries to every village, however remote, and to every hamlet, however retired. He that provides not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Whatever may be the splendour of his charity, if he can pass by his own flesh and blood, there must be something defective in his principles. And is not this equally true of things spiritual as of things temporal? If we can weep over distant nations—if we can be aroused to energetic exertions on their behalf, while, at the same time, we can overlook those who tread the same soil with ourselves, perishing for lack of knowledge at our very doors—then, to whatever excitement we are yielding, we certainly are not possessed of that charity without which man is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal [cheers]. This desire of our churches to unite together, in order to furnish the home population with the truth, is the best

practical answer that we can give to the infidel, who objects to Christianity, because, as he says, patriotism is not one of the virtues which it inculcates. If we see to understand by patriotism, the feeling which burned in the breasts of the heroes of antiquity, which induced them to despise the claims of humanity, and to trample upon the liberties of their fellow-creatures, then Christianity abjures it. But if well-sustained efforts to plant a garden of moral rectitude in every village in which mankind may find some repose from misery and vice—efforts to banish far from every home and every heart the dominion of sin and sorrow—if these efforts constitute patriotism, then is patriotism the very spirit of our religion, and it is seen in all the acts of our disciples; and the humblest member of the Home Missionary society exhibits a patriotism superior to that of Tully, when he opposed the conspirators of his country, or Decius, when he submitted to death on its behalf. This union of churches to supply the Gospel to those unprovided with it, is, as it appears to me, the best practical answer we can give to those who would argue for an establishment on the ground of the want of a desire on the part of the community to obtain the gospel for themselves. This want is admitted, but to whom shall we look in order to provide the bread of life for the perishing? Shall we look to that state which seems itself to be utterly unacquainted with the nature of the instruction to be imparted [cheers]? The senate may erect its splendid places, it may ordain its formularies, it may support its priests in order to sustain those formularies and to teach them, while at the same time the people shall be in darkness. To whom shall we look but to that body in which the truth is deposited, and to that body which has received a commission from its Head, higher than the united signets of all the earth combined, to extend that truth to the utmost bounds of the earth, beginning at Jerusalem [loud cheers]? To whom shall we look to furnish the truth to the dying people but to the church of the living God? And why is it that the churches are called upon now, after so many centuries of state provision, to unite in Home Missionary association, but that, notwithstanding the various buildings that have been erected, and notwithstanding the creeds that have been established, and notwithstanding the mighty army of ministers that has been sustained, our population in the manufacturing districts, and still more in the agricultural, is still steeped in ignorance and baptised in unbelief? The churches of Jesus Christ acknowledge the claim that is made upon them; and if there be any community styling itself a church, which would pass from this, its proper duty, and give it unto others, then does it induce us to call into decided question its right to the title [hear]. If it be a true church, it must possess and must exhibit the spirit which the apostle praised of old in the church of Thessalonica from which "the word of God sounded abroad unto Macedonia and Achaia, to all the regions round about." Whatever others, therefore, may say of their claims or their succession, while the churches of Great Britain are united in a Home Missionary association, they have proved themselves the true successors of the churches that were planted by the apostles [cheers]. Another reason why I think we should sustain the home missionaries, is the productive nature of the soil. The time has gone by when the bigotry of the upper classes, acting upon the ignorance of the lower, would prevent our missionaries from speaking the truth to the people. There remain, indeed, some retired spots, in which the newly-awakened zeal of the Puseyite clergy may induce individuals to abstain from the ministry of your missionaries; but with these exceptions, and scarcely can we call them exceptions, the whole land is open to your efforts. Already, in 300 towns and villages, are your missionaries located, and there is not one village, nor one hamlet, into which your missionaries may not go, and there, without fear, proclaim the truth of the gospel [hear, hear]. For there is a spirit of independence among the people themselves, which will not suffer them to be controlled by any of the influences which may be brought to act upon them [hear, hear]. That was a noble boy of whom Mr Baker spoke at Boroughbridge. Two half-crowns were offered to him not to attend the schools established by the dissenters. But although those two half-crowns were to him as the riches of Croesus, yet he was able to withstand the temptation, and, notwithstanding the threats which were added to the bribe, he determined to attend the school of his own choice [cheers]. And if this be the spirit of a boy, it will be found that there are multitudes in our land, who have come to man's estate, who will not suffer themselves to be deterred from attendance on your ministry by all the efforts brought to bear upon them. It is easier for us to contend against any adversaries, than it is for them to contend against a system which is thus beloved. Our own native Saxon, which we learned from our mothers' lips, will take us through the length and breadth of the country, and will procure us a welcome in every heart. See the results of your exertions in no less than eight hundred added to your churches during the past year; how many are added to your congregations you may easily conceive. Does not God, then, tell us, as plainly as his providence can speak, that this is a soil which we are to cultivate? He has blessed us abroad—he has blessed us nearer home; but most of all has he blessed us in this our own beloved land. Let us, therefore, while we attend to more distant places, still more diligently cultivate that which he has assigned us, where we may hope to see the springing of the seed and the shout of the harvest-home. Let us remember that the Home Missionary Society is one of the best means whereby the religious education of our people may be secured throughout the various vil-

lages in which they are placed. We must recollect that, although we have defeated Sir James Graham's bill, we have not secured the rising population of this country from the attempts that will be made to bring them under the tuition of those who, we believe, will teach them fatal error. It was my honour—shall I call it?—to hear on the past day the Lord Bishop of London preach; I denominated him the Lord Bishop in order to distinguish him from these (pointing to the gentlemen on the platform), the New Testament bishops of the churches of London [cheers]. The Lord Bishop laid down, as his premises, the inability of man indeed to save himself without the special grace of the Holy Spirit; and the right of the individual to that special grace was, he declared, the great benefit that we receive in baptism. By our baptism, he said, we are placed in a position to receive that grace from which others are cut off. Had it not been in a cathedral, I should have liked to ask him, how then he could account for the strange fact, that those who have not that baptism display so many of the fruits of the Spirit in so much richer degree than those who have that baptism? It was not possible, however, for me to ask that question there. But if the Lord Bishop of London, speaking to the judges of the land, lays down this doctrine as the doctrine of what he emphatically calls "our church," can we doubt that curates and schoolmasters, throughout the length and breadth of the land, will teach the rising generation the doctrine of baptismal regeneration in all the fulness of its falsehood [hear, hear]? We desire to rescue the children from such instruction as this; we desire to rescue them from that which is evil, and to impart to them that which is good; and when it is remembered that there are thousands of churches united, in connexion with your Home Missionary Society, in teaching the rising generation that word which is "able to make them wise unto salvation," we surely have here a powerful argument which should not tell upon us only, but should induce all friends of religious education, throughout our land, to sustain the institution [hear, hear]. At all times, whatever we do in the service of our Lord, we should do with all our might; but there are indications in the political aspect of the present period which especially call upon us all to "work while it is called to-day" [hear, hear]. Even the casual observer can perceive the gathering together of the forces of civil and religious despotism in Great Britain and Ireland. Spiritual despotism in its worst form exists in the sister country. Civil despotism has endeavoured, by every means which it possesses, to destroy the spiritual despotism of Ireland [hear]. The government of this country, so far as it has exhibited itself in Ireland, has been a fierce despotism; and with the acts of that government we can find nothing to compare, except the act of the Emperor of the Russians, in commanding the whole of the Jewish population to remove from the places in which they were located, and withdraw into another part of his dominions. Hitherto the civil power has been unable to trample upon the spiritual authority. It has spread and taken a still closer hold on the affections of the people, and it lives this day in gigantic stature. What, then, does civil despotism say? "Seeing that we cannot subdue you, we will bribe you." On both sides of the houses of legislature is the voice heard, "We must pay the priesthood" [hear, hear]. There is no difference here between conservative and liberal. The government principle declares, "As we cannot destroy the papal power, we will take it into union with us, and thus we will endeavour to reduce to submission all classes in that land." Hitherto the spiritual despotism has withstood the bribe which has been offered to it; withstood it not, let me say, from any love for the voluntary principle—it knows it not; it may not indeed have the arm of the civil law, but it has the arm of a more powerful law to compel all its members to sustain it; not, I repeat, from any love for the voluntary principle, but because it believes that, if it holds out a little longer, it need not be stipendiary upon the state, because it will receive those tithes and manors which were originally in its possession in the middle ages [hear, hear]. I believe that the government of this country, rather than lose their hold there, would be prepared to give way even to such a demand as that [hear, hear]. And then, in our own country, see how spiritual despotism is raising and exalting itself on every hand. What are the reports which you receive from your missionaries, but announcements of the beginnings of its exertions? Civil and religious despotism, we believe, will yet combine together their forces, and, like Satan, when he "dilated stood," so will they endeavour to magnify their preparations until they are able, if possible, entirely to subdue us. It is our business to endeavour to make provision for any such unhappy combination, when it shall ensue; and we believe that the best provision we can make, the only adequate and effectual provision which the circumstances of the case will allow, is to sustain home missionary exertions, and to plant baptist churches throughout the land [cheers]. I say baptist churches, because wherever you have planted a baptist church, there you have established an asylum for civil and religious liberty [hear, hear]. A baptist church, understanding its principles, and in its own neighbourhood carrying them into effect, must necessarily secure, in the whole vicinity around, a living testimony in favour of those great principles which we have so long held, and for which our fathers were content to die [cheers]. It may be that God will not permit us to prevent the formation of that combination to which I have referred. It may be necessary, for the purposes of his providence, to permit it still to advance, in order that he may demand of the high places in this country the righteous blood which has been shed in days that are past. This we leave with him. But even if the missionary



churches which have been established should not be an effective barrier at this time, yet they will secure the great and proper aim of all our preaching [hear, hear]. Let us remember that we shall still save immortal souls, and still augment the number of the redeemed; and to whatever other objects we may give our attention and devote our energies, oh, let us most of all and chiefly sustain those operations as the best for the interests of mankind at large! Freely we have received, freely let us give [cheers].

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried.

Mr WATSON, of Edinburgh, then moved the following resolution:—

"That this meeting cannot contemplate the religious position of multitudes of their countrymen, both in the agricultural and manufacturing districts—the peculiar errors with which they are menaced—or the character of the agency employed for their enlightenment, without entertaining and giving expression to an increased persuasion that this society has the strongest claims on the support of Christians in general, and of the baptist denomination in particular."

He said:—With regard to the position of your missionaries, let me place before this audience the fact, that in very many instances, the scattered hamlets and villages and cottages of England are removed miles from any place of religious worship. It is a melancholy fact, that the aged sinner, tottering on the brink of the grave, cannot, by reason of distance, come to that place of worship to hear of the way of salvation; nor can the child, for the first ten years of its existence, be brought under the joyful sound of the gospel. Even when they are located in those parts of the rural districts in which they may be guided to the place of worship appointed by the state, and in which they are to receive religious knowledge, yet they have not the means of judging of the soundness of the doctrine which is taught there. It is very different with you who live in London. If a man goes into a place of worship here, and does not get the right article, he can go into another [laughter]. If he goes from the church to the dissenters, and does not find the thing that does his soul good, he will go to the methodists, and if he does not find it there, he will go from place to place till he does obtain it. But in the rural districts there is no choice, if you do not take the article which the government has provided, you get nothing, or worse than nothing [hear]. This is a case that loudly demands the sympathies of the entire Christian world. There is a famine, not of bread nor of water, in those districts, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. The sympathies of your society ought to be called forth for this special reason. But I must advert to the fact, that in many parts of this land there is another gospel preached than that which is contained in the sacred book of God. And what are we to say when the people are brought under the sound of a perverted gospel? Are we not to hasten to communicate to them that which alone can sanctify and save the soul? I had not the privilege of hearing the Bishop of London yesterday, but before there was any noise about Puseyism, I heard a minister of the church of England preach on the subject of baptism. He said, that was a joyous day on which you were called into existence as a rational being—a day for ever to be remembered to the end of your life, but a day far more worthy of recollection was that on which you were brought to the baptismal font, and there made new creatures in Christ Jesus [hear, hear]! Did not my heart recoil from the abominations of Rome? Did I not feel, when I emerged from that edifice, that I breathed a purer air under God's own heaven? Did I not feel that I had made my escape from a system which, if I understand the Bible, must be doomed to everlasting perdition [cheers]? I mention these things, not to prejudice a solitary individual against the government or the state church, but to show the necessity for our operations. If we find an individual perishing for lack of knowledge, shall we not go and communicate to him the precious word of life? Unquestionably we should [hear]. I know that a certain party will say, Who gave you a right to preach the gospel? Who put his hands on your head and sent you to preach the gospel? Who gave you permission to open your mouth? I answer the question by putting another—Who gives permission to any man, woman, or child, if he or she be a Christian, to hold his or her tongue [loud applause]? I read in the holy scriptures that the Spirit and the Bride say come, and he who hears is to say, Come. He is to teach the gospel who has felt its power. I care not whether he wears a surplice, or whether he wants a coat, if he carries with him the tidings of mercy, and is the instrument of renovating the soul [hear, hear]. There are peculiar errors abroad at the present moment, as we have already heard, that demand our special attention. If ever there was a period at which your Society was called to engage with increasing ardour and energy in the field of home missions, it is the present. When was there a period at which infidelity was more rife than now? There was a time when infidelity was popular. The Voltaires, Bolingbokes, and Gibbons, and other philosophic gentry, rendered infidelity popular, by appealing to the higher orders of society. But now, infidelity is a sneaking thing; it goes into the workshop, into the counting-house; it goes to the scavengers of the streets; it seeks to infuse its poison into the soul of all, small and great. I know that it is now called by a beautiful title, a very fine name, that of socialism; though it is the most unsocial thing in existence, for it separates man from his God, and man and woman, bound in lawful wedlock, from each other. That system is gaining ground in every direction; and it is for your Society to send its agents and neutralise its influence in cities and in rural districts. Allusion has been made to the errors of Puseyism; there are a great many individuals, even in England, that do not know what it

is, and they maintain that we dissenters have got up a hue and cry about a thing of which there is no danger. What does this audience think—if a portion should be ignorant of this subject—are the principles of Puseyism? We are taught that the grand design of it is to bring down the understanding of men, and to place them, as rational beings, below the feet of the clergy—that is the true state of the case [hear, hear]. The Divine authority, they say, is the grand thing that is wanted; and because that authority has been, in a great measure, lost, therefore there is to be a desperate effort to restore it to its pristine greatness. The Holy Scriptures give me to understand that the apostles have no successors; on the contrary, that they yet live, and that they sit on the twelve thrones, in the holy Bible, judging the twelve tribes [cheers]. The idea of supposing that the apostles die, is out of the question; the men are in glory, I admit, but their word has been stamped with Heaven's imprimatur. That word will continue to be the law of the church, while there is a church on earth; and woe to the man who presumes to take the crown from the apostolic head, and place it on the head of any bishop on the face of the earth [hear, hear]! Our society is calculated, through its agents, to place this matter in a full and clear light, and, by bringing the light of divine truth into the understandings of the people, to make them aware of their danger—to draw their attention to the Scripture, which, as Chillingworth says, is the religion of protestants, the only ground on which the man is to be judged, and saved or condemned. The right of private judgment in this country must be preserved inviolate. I have said that the clergy desire to tread on men's understandings, in order that they may play their own game; but he is in the most secure position to resist them, who has the Bible in his hands, holding that, and that only, as authority in matters of religion. In his private judgment, he has as complete a security as in the judgment of any individual, even with a mitre on his head. Looking to the character of your agents, I do not know any to whom I would commit the preaching of the gospel rather than to them. I would not commit it to the ministers of the church of England if they would volunteer—the truth of the matter is, they would spoil the whole work [laughter and cheers]. I consider that your agents are the men to visit the rural districts, and the lower orders of society. This class of men are somewhat on a level with those to whom they minister. I have no objection to appoint men of the greatest erudition to our London congregations. I have no objection that you should employ men of address, and understanding, and intellect, to labour amongst those that have received a refined education, and great enlargement of mind; but I have a great objection to the appointment of these gentlemen, with a view to Christianise our rural population. I am satisfied that the sentiment of Robert Hall is one founded upon just views of human nature. When Lord Sidmouth's bill was about to go through the House—ah, they have often made attempts upon us—the Bishop of London—not the present bishop—was in the park, and so was Robert Hall. One of the bishop's friends asked him if he should like to be introduced to Robert Hall, to which he replied in the affirmative, and the latter was invited to dine with the former. After dinner, the bishop broached the subject, and inquired what Robert Hall thought about the bill. He replied, "I was taking tea at the house of one of my members, in Leicester, and we were asked to go and hear a methodist preacher. We went, and after sitting for some time, a plain-looking man came in, ascended the rostrum, led the devotions, and gave out his text. He had only proceeded in his sermon a few minutes, when I was in tears; I would have laid my learning at that man's feet to have possessed that man's talent" [hear, hear]. From this, Mr Hall drew the following conclusion:—"My lord, let these men alone; they will find out teachers suitable to themselves, and every class of the community will do so—they do not need your bill" [cheers]. Now, the class of individuals we employ I hold to be the very best class of men for the purpose. They are plain, unsophisticated men—men of all work. They will go to the bed-side of the poor, and wretched, and dying, and, when dead, bury them without fee [cheers]. They will pour out their souls over their departing spirits, and commend them to the great Immanuel. They will feel that their reward is greatest when they have been instrumental in rescuing a soul from death [hear, hear]. I call upon you, therefore, to support these agents. The doctrines they preach are those, receiving which any man is safe, as Fuller says, "to plunge into eternity" [hear, hear]. We ought to sustain this society systematically. I am told that the people of London are very fond of excitement, but that they do not pull so long as we do in Scotland. I should say that this society is not only worthy of a long pull and a strong pull, but a pull altogether. It is worthy of being sustained by the Christians of this land generally. We ought to vow, in the presence of God, that we will never forsake the men who have gone out to the rural districts and to the manufacturing population—who, in the face of scorn and of the world's obloquy, have gone forth to proclaim the gospel of Christ. Not that, if they were here to-night, I would have them carry away from this meeting all that they have heard, and infuse it into their preaching. We have met here to sustain the society, and, meeting for such a purpose, we have a right, as free-born Englishmen, to express our sentiments. But, when missionaries are sent out to preach the gospel, I would have them preach it without controversy [hear, hear]. I would have them exhibit "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." If they exhibit God's truth,

error will fall before it; there is enough in that truth to eat out all the error by which it is surrounded. I now bid you farewell—rejoicing in your operations—rejoicing in your society's existence and success—and earnestly praying that the God of all grace may be ever with you.

Mr T. F. NEWMAN (of Shortwood), on rising to second the resolution, said:—I learn, with great pleasure, that this is the largest meeting which has ever been held in support of the Baptist Home Missionary society. This is the first occasion in which I have had the satisfaction of mingling my feelings, my sympathies, and my interests with you, on an occasion of this kind; and little, surely, remains for me to do, but to say how heartily I concur in the sentiments to which I have listened this evening. I am glad that the strain of remark has, without exception, embodied those sentiments to which every Christian, in every section of the church of God, must heartily respond. Sometimes this has not been the case. The peculiarities of denominational sentiment have occasionally been made to occupy too prominent a place. It is true that I, for one, hold that our peculiarities of sentiment, as a denomination, are of vast importance; but, at the same time, I believe that our friends present will fully concur with me in the sentiment, that the agents of this society are sent forth, not to advocate our peculiar views as a baptist denomination, but to hold up the Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning work as the only ground of the salvation of a guilty and rebellious world. Reference has been made this evening—very naturally made, after a report like that to which we have listened—reference has been repeatedly made to the false doctrines, the criminal, and cruel, and fatal delusions, which, in different parts of our own country, are now being sedulously promoted. I know not whether it has struck any other person, but it has occurred to my own mind, while I have been listening, that, however valuable it may be, some other agency than that which is already in existence and in operation, is demanded by the exigencies of the present times. We have need not only of those devoted men who are labouring in the cause of Christ with great success in different parts of the United Empire; we have need not only of their agency, and of the multiplication of that agency, but it appears to me that there is now ample scope and verge for the employment of other men, who, like Whitfield, shall go and storm our cathedral cities and the other towns and cities of the land; men of eminence, men who shall be qualified by their condition, their scholarship, and their attainments, to stand in the front of this mighty battle, and be prepared to grapple with the foe, come that foe whence he may [cheers]. The denomination to which I belong has men of this class—men who, I verily believe, if called upon by the churches and their brethren, would not hesitate to throw themselves in the breach; but who, in our commercial towns, and our cathedral towns, would be prepared to stand in the highway, to preach the great doctrines of the reformation, and to exhibit, under the very shade of our cathedrals, the cross of Christ, as man's only refuge, the only basis on which a sinner's hope can securely rest [cheers]. The great congregational body, our independent brethren, might surely supply some worthy, some honoured, some successful agents in an enterprise of this kind [hear, hear]. This great city contains three men, whose names occur to me at the present moment, connected with that body, whom I should delight to see giving themselves this summer to that great work; and they are three Johns—John Campbell, John Leifchild, and John Burnet [cheers]. I will not venture to single out from the baptist ranks the brethren to whom my mind very naturally reverts, as worthy of being co-partners in this great work. But I do not believe we should be behind our independent friends [cheers]. I verily believe that we might go forth two by two, an independent and a baptist, proving in the face of the world, that, while we differ on some of the non-essentials of our common faith, we both bow together, in deep submission and in humble faith, before the cross of Christ, regarding that as the rallying point of the churches on earth, which will be their everlasting song in heaven [loud cheers]. I have no train of remark, through having had the ground completely cut from under my feet by the preceding speaker. I did not expect that he would so completely anticipate my materials [laughter]. Since, however, I came here, this other train of thought occurred to me, and in venturing to present myself for a few moments to the attention of this audience, I thought it might not be unprofitable, if I thus ventured to give utterance to the feelings and sentiments of my heart. In reference to the final issue of the great conflict between truth and error, not one shade of doubt, I trust, ever crosses our minds. It is true, that the energies of the anti-Christian party have been called into vigorous and unwonted exercise during the last few years of the history of our land. But why is this? Is it not a plain truth, that evangelical truth was previously making way? Did not the enemy take alarm [hear, hear]? Did not the foe conceive, that, though the existing agency was of a comparatively humble and unobtrusive character, yet it was secretly and silently disabusing the minds of men of their bigotry, their follies, and their ignorance? Is not this the real cause of the new and unwonted zeal with which the anti-Christian party in this land have begun to diffuse their sentiments and to use their power in order to secure the triumph of their principles [hear, hear]? Let us not then despair of the issue. The vapours of anti-Christian doctrines may, indeed, seem to spread over the face of our beloved country; but let us not fear for the result. Let us not for a moment tremble for the ark of God. The cause in which our missionaries are engaged is his; their work he will crown with success, and not many



Christian to feel that he is a soldier of the cross; that the humblest can do something for Christ; and that it is his honour and his duty to do whatever he can [hear, hear]. May I be allowed to say, we want something of the spirit of the Jamaica churches in our churches at home, where all the members feel that religion is their work and business, the service of Christ their constant employment, and their highest delight? We want renewed energy and zeal, on account of the state of the present times. Wondrous times are passing over us; we may talk of political changes, and desire them; but we want one change above all others, the imbuing of the public mind with the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. No change will meet the wants of our own country, our own days, except this great and divine change be effected. Strange times, indeed, when a large section of professing Christians, avowedly the only Christians, or very nearly so, are assuming an unwonted attitude, and giving utterance to sentiments so hostile to liberty and so subversive to religion; when men can silence the living oracles of God, and bid us listen to the confused and jarring notes of a vain tradition; when men can preach the doctrine of a reserve upon the vital truths of the gospel, and urge, instead, fasts and ceremonies, and confession to priests, and mystic rites; when they can withhold the children's bread, the bread which came down from heaven, and was given for the life of the world, and, instead of this, present but stones and husks, or the apples of Sodom; when men can tell us, that they blush for the reformers—that they denounce the reformation, and discard the name of protestant; when men can dethrone the Redeemer, cast him down from his eminence, and place in his stead some anomalous thing, which they call the church, but the head and tail of which is the priest—when these things are going on, it is time that all Christians should be aroused from their lethargy, and be prepared, not only to maintain their liberty and religion, but to perpetuate them, and hand them down to their posterity [loud cheers].

Mr G. H. DAVIS (of Bristol), in seconding the resolution, said:—It is sometimes difficult to speak in praise of any institution, without appearing to speak comparatively, and to insinuate, at least, the depreciation of some kindred institution. I trust that nothing that falls from me this evening, in pressing the claims of the home mission on the churches, may be misinterpreted, that I may not be supposed to exalt these claims unduly above either our Irish or our foreign missions. We sometimes hear, with lamentation, that so much is done for distant lands, and comparatively so little for home; and we fear that when the country learns that the Home Missionary society is now £800 in debt, that that lamentation may be, in some quarters, renewed—but in it we can have no sympathy. We believe the foreign mission to be the glory of our churches; we believe it will be a day unhappy for the interests of the world abroad—unhappy for Christian communities at home—when the claims of the foreign missions shall be put in the second place, even when compared with those of home itself [hear, hear]. We do not believe that the churches do attend to foreign claims rather than to their own land. We must remember that every church is itself a Home Missionary society [hear, hear]. It cannot be a selfish body; it must desire its own enlargement, which is, in other words, desiring the conversion of its home population, and, therefore, I think it is but fair, when we compare the sums expended upon a distant soil with those expended on our own, that we should take into consideration all that the churches furnish for the extension of the gospel of Christ in connexion with themselves, and in their own immediate neighbourhoods, and then, I believe, we shall come to the conclusion that the churches of this country do not attend to distant lands while they neglect their home population [hear, hear]. Thus I believe it should be—home must have the first claim upon the Christian. Though the apostle Paul received a commission to preach to the Gentile world, yet he did not forget Israel. Wheresoever he went, his heart's desire and his prayer to God for his countrymen was that they might be saved; and in this sentiment we are persuaded that every missionary that leaves our shores cordially unites. Though his proper business may be with the Indian, or the negro, still he remembers the Zion of his father-land, and is solicitous for its establishment and extension. And how much more should we enter into this sentiment whose lot is cast here! We look upon our own countrymen; we admire their energy, their extended commerce, their spirit impatient of all tyranny; but we feel that these things will profit them nothing in the last great day of account without the knowledge of Him whom to know is life eternal, and therefore it is that we are not satisfied with the high position to which we have advanced as a civilised community. We desire to Christianise the whole land; and we send our missionaries to every village, however remote, and to every hamlet, however retired. He that provides not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Whatever may be the splendour of his charity, if he can pass by his own flesh and blood, there must be something defective in his principles. And is not this equally true of things spiritual as of things temporal? If we can weep over distant nations—if we can be aroused to energetic exertions on their behalf, while, at the same time, we can overlook those who tread the same soil with ourselves, perishing for lack of knowledge at our very doors—then, to whatever excitement we are yielding, we certainly are not possessed of that charity without which man is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal [cheers]. This desire of our churches to unite together, in order to furnish the home population with the truth, is the best

practical answer that we can give to the infidel, who objects to Christianity, because, as he says, patriotism is not one of the virtues which it inculcates. If we are to understand by patriotism the feeling which burned in the breasts of the heroes of antiquity, which induced them to despise the claims of humanity, and to trample upon the liberties of their fellow-creatures, then Christianity abjures it. But if well-sustained efforts to plant a garden of moral rectitude in every village in which mankind may find some repose from misery and vice—efforts to banish far from every home and every heart the dominion of sin and sorrow—if these efforts constitute patriotism, then is patriotism the very spirit of our religion, and it is seen in all the acts of our disciples; and the humblest member of the Home Missionary society exhibits a patriotism superior to that of Tully, when he opposed the conspirators of his country, or Decius, when he submitted to death on its behalf. This union of churches to supply the Gospel to those unprovided with it, is, as it appears to me, the best practical answer we can give to those who would argue for an establishment on the ground of the want of a desire on the part of the community to obtain the gospel for themselves. This want is admitted, but to whom shall we look in order to provide the bread of life for the perishing? Shall we look to that state which seems itself to be utterly unacquainted with the nature of the instruction to be imparted [cheers]? The senate may erect its splendid places, it may ordain its formularies, it may support its priests in order to sustain those formularies and to teach them, while at the same time the people shall be in darkness. To whom shall we look but to that body in which the truth is deposited, and to that body which has received a commission from its Head, higher than the united signets of all the earth combined, to extend that truth to the utmost bounds of the earth, beginning at Jerusalem [loud cheers]? To whom shall we look to furnish the truth to the dying people but to the church of the living God? And why is it that the churches are called upon now, after so many centuries of state provision, to unite in Home Missionary association, but that, notwithstanding the various buildings that have been erected, and notwithstanding the creeds that have been established, and notwithstanding the mighty army of ministers that has been sustained, our population in the manufacturing districts, and still more in the agricultural, is still steeped in ignorance and baptised in unbelief? The churches of Jesus Christ acknowledge the claim that is made upon them; and if there be any community styling itself a church, which would pass from this, its proper duty, and give it unto others, then does it induce us to call into decided question its right to the title [hear]. If it be a true church, it must possess and must exhibit the spirit which the apostle praised of old in the church of Thessalonica from which "the word of God sounded abroad unto Macedonia and Achaia, to all the regions round about." Whatever others, therefore, may say of their claims or their succession, while the churches of Great Britain are united in a Home Missionary association, they have proved themselves the true successors of the churches that were planted by the apostles [cheers]. Another reason why I think we should sustain the home missionaries, is the productive nature of the soil. The time has gone by when the bigotry of the upper classes, acting upon the ignorance of the lower, would prevent our missionaries from speaking the truth to the people. There remain, indeed, some retired spots, in which the newly-awakened zeal of the Puseyite clergy may induce individuals to abstain from the ministry of your missionaries; but with these exceptions, and scarcely can we call them exceptions, the whole land is open to your efforts. Already, in 300 towns and villages, are your missionaries located, and there is not one village, nor one hamlet, into which your missionaries may not go, and there, without fear, proclaim the truth of the gospel [hear, hear]. For there is a spirit of independence among the people themselves, which will not suffer them to be controlled by any of the influences which may be brought to act upon them [hear, hear]. That was a noble boy of whom Mr Baker spoke at Boroughbridge. Two half-crowns were offered to him not to attend the schools established by the dissenters. But although those two half-crowns were to him as the riches of Croesus, yet he was able to withstand the temptation, and, notwithstanding the threats which were added to the bribe, he determined to attend the school of his own choice [cheers]. And if this be the spirit of a boy, it will be found that there are multitudes in our land, who have come to man's estate, who will not suffer themselves to be deterred from attendance on your ministry by all the efforts brought to bear upon them. It is easier for us to contend against any adversaries, than it is for them to contend against a system which is thus beloved. Our own native Saxon, which we learned from our mothers' lips, will take us through the length and breadth of the country, and will procure us a welcome in every heart. See the results of your exertions in no less than eight hundred added to your churches during the past year; how many are added to your congregations you may easily conceive. Does not God, then, tell us, as plainly as his providence can speak, that this is a soil which we are to cultivate? He has blessed us abroad—he has blessed us nearer home; but most of all has he blessed us in this our own beloved land. Let us, therefore, while we attend to more distant places, still more diligently cultivate that which he has assigned us, where we may hope to see the springing of the seed and the shout of the harvest-home. Let us remember that the Home Missionary Society is one of the best means whereby the religious education of our people may be secured throughout the various vil-

lages in which they are placed. We must recollect that, although we have defeated Sir James Graham's bill, we have not secured the rising population of this country from the attempts that will be made to bring them under the tuition of those who, we believe, will teach them fatal error. It was my honour—shall I call it?—to hear on the past day the Lord Bishop of London preach; I denominated him the Lord Bishop in order to distinguish him from these (pointing to the gentlemen on the platform), the New Testament bishops of the churches of London [cheers]. The Lord Bishop laid down, as his premises, the inability of man indeed to save himself without the special grace of the Holy Spirit; and the right of the individual to that special grace was, he declared, the great benefit that we receive in baptism. By our baptism, he said, we are placed in a position to receive that grace from which others are cut off. Had it not been in a cathedral, I should have liked to ask him, how then he could account for the strange fact, that those who have not that baptism display so many of the fruits of the Spirit in so much richer degree than those who have that baptism? It was not possible, however, for me to ask that question there. But if the Lord Bishop of London, speaking to the judges of the land, lays down this doctrine as the doctrine of what he emphatically calls "our church," can we doubt that curates and schoolmasters, throughout the length and breadth of the land, will teach the rising generation the doctrine of baptismal regeneration in all the fulness of its falsehood [hear, hear]? We desire to rescue the children from such instruction as this; we desire to rescue them from that which is evil, and to impart to them that which is good; and when it is remembered that there are thousands of churches united, in connexion with your Home Missionary Society, in teaching the rising generation that word which is "able to make them wise unto salvation," we surely have here a powerful argument which should not tell upon us only, but should induce all friends of religious education, throughout our land, to sustain the institution [hear, hear]. At all times, whatever we do in the service of our Lord, we should do with all our might; but there are indications in the political aspect of the present period which especially call upon us all to "work while it is called to-day" [hear, hear]. Even the casual observer can perceive the gathering together of the forces of civil and religious despotism in Great Britain and Ireland. Spiritual despotism in its worst form exists in the sister country. Civil despotism has endeavoured, by every means which it possesses, to destroy the spiritual despotism of Ireland [hear]. The government of this country, so far as it has exhibited itself in Ireland, has been a fierce despotism; and with the acts of that government we can find nothing to compare, except the act of the Emperor of the Russians, in commanding the whole of the Jewish population to remove from the places in which they were located, and withdraw into another part of his dominions. Hitherto the civil power has been unable to trample upon the spiritual authority. It has spread and taken a still closer hold on the affections of the people, and it lives this day in gigantic stature. What, then, does civil despotism say? "Seeing that we cannot subdue you, we will bribe you." On both sides of the houses of legislature is the voice heard, "We must pay the priesthood" [hear, hear]. There is no difference here between conservative and liberal. The government principle declares, "As we cannot destroy the papal power, we will take it into union with us, and thus we will endeavour to reduce to submission all classes in that land." Hitherto the spiritual despotism has withstood the bribe which has been offered to it; withstood it not, let me say, from any love for the voluntary principle—it knows it not; it may not indeed have the arm of the civil law, but it has the arm of a more powerful law to compel all its members to sustain it; not, I repeat, from any love for the voluntary principle, but because it believes that, if it holds out a little longer, it need not be stipendiary upon the state, because it will receive those tithes and manors which were originally in its possession in the middle ages [hear, hear]. I believe that the government of this country, rather than lose their hold there, would be prepared to give way even to such a demand as that [hear, hear]. And then, in our own country, see how spiritual despotism is raising and exalting itself on every hand. What are the reports which you receive from your missionaries, but announcements of the beginnings of its exertions? Civil and religious despotism, we believe, will yet combine together their forces, and, like Satan, when he "dilated stood," so will they endeavour to magnify their preparations until they are able, if possible, entirely to subdue us. It is our business to endeavour to make provision for any such unhappy combination, when it shall ensue; and we believe that the best provision we can make, the only adequate and effectual provision which the circumstances of the case will allow, is to sustain home missionary exertions, and to plant baptist churches throughout the land [cheers]. I say baptist churches, because wherever you have planted a baptist church, there you have established an asylum for civil and religious liberty [hear, hear]. A baptist church, understanding its principles, and in its own neighbourhood carrying them into effect, must necessarily secure, in the whole vicinity around, a living testimony in favour of those great principles which we have so long held, and for which our fathers were content to die [cheers]. It may be that God will not permit us to prevent the formation of that combination to which I have referred. It may be necessary, for the purposes of his providence, to permit it still to advance, in order that he may demand of the high places in this country the righteous blood which has been shed in days that are past. This we leave with him. But even if the missionary



churches which have been established should not be an effective barrier at this time, yet they will secure the great and proper aim of all our preaching [hear, hear]. Let us remember that we shall still save immortal souls, and still augment the number of the redeemed; and to whatever other objects we may give our attention and devote our energies, oh, let us most of all and chiefly sustain those operations as the best for the interests of mankind at large! Freely we have received, freely let us give [cheers].

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried.

Mr WATSON, of Edinburgh, then moved the following resolution:—

"That this meeting cannot contemplate the religious position of multitudes of their countrymen, both in the agricultural and manufacturing districts—the peculiar errors with which they are menaced—or the character of the agency employed for their enlightenment, without entertaining and giving expression to an increased persuasion that this society has the strongest claims on the support of Christians in general, and of the baptist denomination in particular."

He said:—With regard to the position of your missionaries, let me place before this audience the fact, that in very many instances, the scattered hamlets and villages and cottages of England are removed miles from any place of religious worship. It is a melancholy fact, that the aged sinner, tottering on the brink of the grave, cannot, by reason of distance, come to that place of worship to hear of the way of salvation; nor can the child, for the first ten years of its existence, be brought under the joyful sound of the gospel. Even when they are located in those parts of the rural districts in which they may be guided to the place of worship appointed by the state, and in which they are to receive religious knowledge, yet they have not the means of judging of the soundness of the doctrine which is taught there. It is very different with you who live in London. If a man goes into a place of worship here, and does not get the right article, he can go into another [laughter]. If he goes from the church to the dissenters, and does not find the thing that does his soul good, he will go to the methodists, and if he does not find it there, he will go from place to place till he does obtain it. But in the rural districts there is no choice, if you do not take the article which the government has provided, you get nothing, or worse than nothing [hear]. This is a case that loudly demands the sympathies of the entire Christian world. There is a famine, not of bread nor of water, in those districts, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. The sympathies of your society ought to be called forth for this special reason. But I must advert to the fact, that in many parts of this land there is another gospel preached than that which is contained in the sacred book of God. And what are we to say when the people are brought under the sound of a perverted gospel? Are we not to hasten to communicate to them that which alone can sanctify and save the soul? I had not the privilege of hearing the Bishop of London yesterday, but before there was any noise about Puseyism, I heard a minister of the church of England preach on the subject of baptism. He said, that was a joyous day on which you were called into existence as a rational being—a day for ever to be remembered to the end of your life, but a day far more worthy of recollection was that on which you were brought to the baptismal font, and there made new creatures in Christ Jesus [hear, hear]! Did not my heart recoil from the abominations of Rome? Did I not feel, when I emerged from that edifice, that I breathed a purer air under God's own heaven? Did I not feel that I had made my escape from a system which, if I understand the Bible, must be doomed to everlasting perdition [cheers]? I mention these things, not to prejudice a solitary individual against the government or the state church, but to show the necessity for our operations. If we find an individual perishing for lack of knowledge, shall we not go and communicate to him the precious word of life? Unquestionably we should [hear]. I know that a certain party will say, Who gave you a right to preach the gospel? Who put his hands on your head and sent you to preach the gospel? Who gave you permission to open your mouth? I answer the question by putting another—Who gives permission to any man, woman, or child, if he or she be a Christian, to hold his or her tongue [loud applause]? I read in the holy scriptures that the Spirit and the Bride say come, and he who hears is to say, Come. He is to teach the gospel who has felt its power. I care not whether he wears a surplice, or whether he wants a coat, if he carries with him the tidings of mercy, and is the instrument of renovating the soul [hear, hear]. There are peculiar errors abroad at the present moment, as we have already heard, that demand our special attention. If ever there was a period at which your Society was called to engage with increasing ardour and energy in the field of home missions, it is the present. When was there a period at which infidelity was more rife than now? There was a time when infidelity was popular. The Voltaires, Bolingbrokes, and Gibbons, and other philosophic gentry, rendered infidelity popular, by appealing to the higher orders of society. But now, infidelity is a sneaking thing; it goes into the workshop, into the counting-house; it goes to the scavengers of the streets; it seeks to infuse its poison into the soul of all, small and great. I know that it is now called by a beautiful title, a very fine name, that of socialism; though it is the most unsocial thing in existence, for it separates man from his God, and man and woman, bound in lawful wedlock, from each other. That system is gaining ground in every direction; and it is for your Society to send its agents and neutralise its influence in cities and in rural districts. Allusion has been made to the errors of Puseyism; there are a great many individuals, even in England, that do not know what it

is, and they maintain that we dissenters have got up a hue and cry about a thing of which there is no danger. What does this audience think—if a portion should be ignorant of this subject—are the principles of Puseyism? We are taught that the grand design of it is to bring down the understanding of men, and to place them, as rational beings, below the feet of the clergy—that is the true state of the case [hear, hear]. The Divine authority, they say, is the grand thing that is wanted; and because that authority has been, in a great measure, lost, therefore there is to be a desperate effort to restore it to its pristine greatness. The Holy Scriptures give me to understand that the apostles have no successors; on the contrary, that they yet live, and that they sit on the twelve thrones, in the holy Bible, judging the twelve tribes [cheers]. The idea of supposing that the apostles die, is out of the question; the men are in glory, I admit, but their word has been entamped with Heaven's imprimatur. That word will continue to be the law of the church, while there is a church on earth; and woe to the man who presumes to take the crown from the apostolic head, and place it on the head of any bishop on the face of the earth [hear, hear]! Our society is calculated, through its agents, to place this matter in a full and clear light, and, by bringing the light of divine truth into the understandings of the people, to make them aware of their danger—to draw their attention to the Scripture, which, as Chillingworth says, is the religion of protestants, the only ground on which the man is to be judged, and saved or condemned. The right of private judgment in this country must be preserved inviolate. I have said that the clergy desire to tread on men's understandings, in order that they may play their own game; but he is in the most secure position to resist them, who has the Bible in his hands, holding that, and that only, as authority in matters of religion. In his private judgment, he has as complete a security as in the judgment of any individual, even with a mitre on his head. Looking to the character of your agents, I do not know any to whom I would commit the preaching of the gospel rather than to them. I would not commit it to the ministers of the church of England if they would volunteer—the truth of the matter is, they would spoil the whole work [laughter and cheers]. I consider that your agents are the men to visit the rural districts, and the lower orders of society. This class of men are somewhat on a level with those to whom they minister. I have no objection to appoint men of the greatest erudition to our London congregations. I have no objection that you should employ men of address, and understanding, and intellect, to labour amongst those that have received a refined education, and great enlargement of mind; but I have a great objection to the appointment of these gentlemen, with a view to Christianise our rural population. I am satisfied that the sentiment of Robert Hall is one founded upon just views of human nature. When Lord Sidmouth's bill was about to go through the House—ah, they have often made attempts upon us—the Bishop of London—not the present bishop—was in the park, and so was Robert Hall. One of the bishop's friends asked him if he should like to be introduced to Robert Hall, to which he replied in the affirmative, and the latter was invited to dine with the former. After dinner, the bishop broached the subject, and inquired what Robert Hall thought about the bill. He replied, "I was taking tea at the house of one of my members, in Leicester, and we were asked to go and hear a methodist preacher. We went, and after sitting for some time, a plain-looking man came in, ascended the rostrum, led the devotions, and gave out his text. He had only proceeded in his sermon a few minutes, when I was in tears; I would have laid my learning at that man's feet to have possessed that man's talent" [hear, hear]. From this, Mr Hall drew the following conclusion:—"My lord, let these men alone; they will find out teachers suitable to themselves, and every class of the community will do so—they do not need your bill" [cheers]. Now, the class of individuals we employ I hold to be the very best class of men for the purpose. They are plain, unsophisticated men—men of all work. They will go to the bed-side of the poor, and wretched, and dying, and, when dead, bury them without fee [cheers]. They will pour out their souls over their departing spirits, and commend them to the great Immanuel. They will feel that their reward is greatest when they have been instrumental in rescuing a soul from death [hear, hear]. I call upon you, therefore, to support these agents. The doctrines they preach are those, receiving which any man is safe, as Fuller says, "to plunge into eternity" [hear, hear]. We ought to sustain this society systematically. I am told that the people of London are very fond of excitement, but that they do not pull so long as we do in Scotland. I should say that this society is not only worthy of a long pull and a strong pull, but a pull altogether. It is worthy of being sustained by the Christians of this land generally. We ought to vow, in the presence of God, that we will never forsake the men who have gone out to the rural districts and to the manufacturing population—who, in the face of scorn and of the world's obloquy, have gone forth to proclaim the gospel of Christ. Not that, if they were here to-night, I would have them carry away from this meeting all that they have heard, and infuse it into their preaching. We have met here to sustain the society, and, meeting for such a purpose, we have a right, as free-born Englishmen, to express our sentiments. But, when missionaries are sent out to preach the gospel, I would have them preach it without controversy [hear, hear]. I would have them exhibit "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." If they exhibit God's truth,

error will fall before it; there is enough in that truth to eat out all the error by which it is surrounded. I now bid you farewell—rejoicing in your operations—rejoicing in your society's existence and success—and earnestly praying that the God of all grace may be ever with you.

Mr T. F. NEWMAN (of Shortwood), on rising to second the resolution, said:—I learn, with great pleasure, that this is the largest meeting which has ever been held in support of the Baptist Home Missionary society. This is the first occasion in which I have had the satisfaction of mingling my feelings, my sympathies, and my interests with you, on an occasion of this kind; and little, surely, remains for me to do, but to say how heartily I concur in the sentiments to which I have listened this evening. I am glad that the strain of remark has, without exception, embodied those sentiments to which every Christian, in every section of the church of God, must heartily respond. Sometimes this has not been the case. The peculiarities of denominational sentiment have occasionally been made to occupy too prominent a place. It is true that I, for one, hold that our peculiarities of sentiment, as a denomination, are of vast importance; but, at the same time, I believe that our friends present will fully concur with me in the sentiment, that the agents of this society are sent forth, not to advocate our peculiar views as a baptist denomination, but to hold up the Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning work as the only ground of the salvation of a guilty and rebellious world. Reference has been made this evening—very naturally made, after a report like that to which we have listened—reference has been repeatedly made to the false doctrines, the criminal, and cruel, and fatal delusions, which, in different parts of our own country, are now being sedulously promoted. I know not whether it has struck any other person, but it has occurred to my own mind, while I have been listening, that, however valuable it may be, some other agency than that which is already in existence and in operation, is demanded by the exigencies of the present times. We have need not only of those devoted men who are labouring in the cause of Christ with great success in different parts of the United Empire; we have need not only of their agency, and of the multiplication of that agency, but it appears to me that there is now ample scope and verge for the employment of other men, who, like Whitfield, shall go and storm our cathedral cities and the other towns and cities of the land; men of eminence, men who shall be qualified by their condition, their scholarship, and their attainments, to stand in the front of this mighty battle, and be prepared to grapple with the foe, come that foe whence he may [cheers]. The denomination to which I belong has men of this class—men who, I verily believe, if called upon by the churches and their brethren, would not hesitate to throw themselves in the breach; but who, in our commercial towns, and our cathedral towns, would be prepared to stand in the highway, to preach the great doctrines of the reformation, and to exhibit, under the very shade of our cathedrals, the cross of Christ, as man's only refuge, the only basis on which a sinner's hope can securely rest [cheers]. The great congregational body, our independent brethren, might surely supply some worthy, some honoured, some successful agents in an enterprise of this kind [hear, hear]. This great city contains three men, whose names occur to me at the present moment, connected with that body, whom I should delight to see giving themselves this summer to that great work: and they are three Johns—John Campbell, John Leifchild, and John Burnet [cheers]. I will not venture to single out from the baptist ranks the brethren to whom my mind very naturally reverts, as worthy of being co-partners in this great work. But I do not believe we should be behind our independent friends [cheers]. I verily believe that we might go forth two by two, an independent and a baptist, proving in the face of the world, that, while we differ on some of the non-essentials of our common faith, we both bow together, in deep submission and in humble faith, before the cross of Christ, regarding that as the rallying point of the churches on earth, which will be their everlasting song in heaven [loud cheers]. I have no train of remark, through having had the ground completely cut from under my feet by the preceding speaker. I did not expect that he would so completely anticipate my materials [laughter]. Since, however, I came here, this other train of thought occurred to me, and in venturing to present myself for a few moments to the attention of this audience, I thought it might not be unprofitable, if I thus ventured to give utterance to the feelings and sentiments of my heart. In reference to the final issue of the great conflict between truth and error, not one shade of doubt, I trust, ever crosses our minds. It is true, that the energies of the anti-Christian party have been called into vigorous and unwonted exercise during the last few years of the history of our land. But why is this? Is it not a plain truth, that evangelical truth was previously making way? Did not the enemy take alarm [hear, hear]? Did not the foe conceive, that, though the existing agency was of a comparatively humble and unobtrusive character, yet it was secretly and silently disabusing the minds of men of their bigotry, their follies, and their ignorance? Is not this the real cause of the new and unwonted zeal with which the anti-Christian party in this land have begun to diffuse their sentiments and to use their power in order to secure the triumph of their principles [hear, hear]? Let us not then despair of the issue. The vapours of anti-Christian doctrines may, indeed, seem to spread over the face of our beloved country; but let us not fear for the result. Let us not for a moment tremble for the ark of God. The cause in which our missionaries are engaged is his; their work he will crown with success, and not many



years shall roll by ere the issue of this struggle shall be hailed with acclamation both on earth and in heaven [cheers]. I rejoice in what our society has been already permitted to effect. I feel assured that its agencies will be increased by the liberality of British Christians, and that its successes will be distinguished by larger measures of divine influence. And if the anticipation which I ventured to indulge, in reference to a new system of operations, should be realised, I shall most heartily rejoice, because I feel convinced, that, in addition to those instrumentalities which are already at work, there is a crying need at the present moment for a public exhibition—I mean the open air, full, plain exhibition—of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, by men of name, by men of standing, by men who will bring to the work all the endowments which a scholastic education can supply, and all the gifts and the graces which the Spirit of God can confer [loud cheers].

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously; after which the collection was made on behalf of the institution.

Mr R. ROFF, of Cambridge, then rose to propose the following resolution:—

"That this meeting entertains a strong conviction, that many of the most valuable operations of this and kindred institutions will be most seriously impaired, unless wise and vigorous efforts be made to secure, on liberal principles, the secular education of the people; and would urge the friends of the society throughout the country to give to this subject their immediate, earnest, and practical attention."

After some prefatory remarks as to the necessity of curtailing his observations, he said:—I regret the necessity of bringing my remarks on the subject of the resolution within very narrow limits. The subject is one, by concession made on all hands, of vast intrinsic importance. The subject, too, is one that has acquired, is acquiring, and will yet acquire, greater accidental importance, arising out of the peculiar state of things in relation to the operations of this and kindred institutions, especially throughout the rural districts of the country—a state of things which has been most fully presented to this meeting, so far as the theory respecting it is concerned, by the preceding speakers. The resolution which I have the honour to move in relation to this subject consists, as will be perceived, of two parts. There is in it the declaration of a strong conviction, and the urging of a practical recommendation. The conviction declared in it relates to the peril of some of the most valuable operations of the society. The peril of any of the operations of a society so valuable as that whose interests have brought us together to-night, would, we apprehend, if at all perceived or admitted by the minds of its friends, awaken very considerable and immediate anxiety. The branch of its operations which is referred to I take to be the educational. The close of the report which we have heard, and which contained so much to excite our thankfulness, and to warrant our mutual congratulations, refers to the state and prospects of the Sunday schools—the eighty-six Sunday schools conducted by a thousand teachers, and including in them about six thousand scholars, in connexion with this society. Efforts are making in relation to what is called secular education, the direct tendency and realised effect of which is to endanger the existence, not to say to impede the usefulness, of these valuable institutions of our society. It is an unquestionable fact, readily admitted by all who are acquainted with what is going on in the villages of our country, and especially in the agricultural districts, that a secular education is now being imparted to the rising generation, which, in its own nature, and through a condition upon which it is given, tends directly and immediately to the destruction of our Sunday schools. I need not say that I refer to the educational efforts made by the high church party, as it is designated, in this country. It is necessary, on a subject like this, to sustain our statements by appealing to facts. Facts have been presented in the report that has been read, the nature of which is calculated to sustain the truth of the statement which I have now ventured to make; and to these facts others might be added in considerable numbers. One which the Secretary, in reading the report, I suppose designedly omitted, is in its bearing worthy of special notice. The substance of it is as follows:—At a tea meeting, an annual tea treat of one of the Sunday schools of a station occupied by an agent of this society, there happened to be present some children belonging to a national school. The clergyman of the place, hearing of this fact, at once summoned the parents of those rebellious and renegade children, and threatened their expulsion from the school on account of the fault which he alleged they had thus committed. He not only did this, but he summoned the committee of that national school, and obtained the passing of a stringent resolution declaratory of his intention, and that of his coadjutors, to carry out to the fullest practicable extent the principles and spirit of the national school system of education, and strongly condemnatory of the conduct of the children and their parents who had attended this tea treat at a dissenting Sunday school [hear, hear]. I might add facts kindred with this which have come under my own notice in that part of the country in which I reside. In a village not very far from Cambridge, only a few weeks ago, an occurrence somewhat similar transpired. In that village there has been for some years a very efficient Sunday school, conducted by Christian men who go forth on the Sabbath day from the town of Cambridge into some of the adjacent villages, to engage in the work of faith and labour of love. One of the happy fruits of Sunday school instruction there imparted, a few years ago, was the conversion of an interesting young female [hear, hear]. After she became the subject of decided personal piety, she employed herself, under the sanction and support, to some extent, of the clergyman of the parish, in teaching a day school. The sanction

and support of the clergyman were awarded to her simply through his indifference to principles of religion, right or wrong. But a very few weeks ago, being in company with other clergymen, not so indifferent to church matters as he himself had proved to be, the subject of education was brought up, and made the topic of conversation, as it is universally, in almost all circumstances, in this country. Inquiries were made by his visitors, as to the state of the schools, of which he spoke, in this village. A suggestion was made to him by those visitors, that it would be very desirable that an examination should be instituted into the condition of these schools, that it might be ascertained whether it squared in its present management with the right views and practices that churchmen should hold and follow. The clergyman requested some of his friends to conduct that examination; and the immediate result of that was, the discovery that this young person did not teach the children the Church Catechism. Those who made that discovery were appalled by it, and expressed their feelings in language indicative of horror to the clergyman on the occasion. He had not thought about it before; but he now promised that henceforth their suggestions should be complied with, and the Catechism taught. He communicated those suggestions speedily to the young person of whom he spoke, and she at once said that she had conscientious objections to teach the Church Catechism. "Well," was the reply, "it is a condition which must be complied with by any one who conducts this school: we are bent on it. We are about also, in consequence of some recommendations which I have received from friends, to build a school room, and the school is to be conducted on the strictly national plan. Now, I put it to your option, whether you will teach the Catechism, and keep the school, or whether you will refuse to teach the Catechism, and lose the school. I will allow you a few weeks to consider of the answer." The young person repeated this conversation to her parents, who, not being the subjects of religious principles, were very angry at her demurring to the suggestion of the clergyman, and threatened that, if she did not comply, they would turn her out of doors, and she should no longer find a home with them. She was deeply affected at the position in which she was thus placed, and knew not what to do; but the grace of God and conscience triumphed. When the time came when her answer must be returned to the clergyman, that answer was unhesitatingly a negative one. She lost the school, she lost her home, and she is now in a lodging provided for her, and is receiving preliminary instruction before being sent to the Normal school of the British and Foreign School society, in order that she may be educated to be a teacher. Let me mention another instance. A dissenting family in the town of Cambridge went, a short time ago, to reside in a village. The young ladies of that family, filled with zeal for the salvation of the souls of those around them, began to exert themselves in Sunday school instruction, and at length established a weekly school, which they sustained at their own expense, and kept under their own supervision. Through the influence of the clergyman, every possible difficulty was raised to their obtaining a room in which to conduct their school. In several instances, the occupants of cottages to whom they made application were threatened with expulsion, if they granted a room to be used as a school. In that village, in consequence simply, as it would appear, of the establishment and continued maintenance of those schools by his dissenting friends, national schools had been established, school-rooms had been built, and were now in vigorous operation. There is another village, not very far from the town of Cambridge, in which, during the last two or three years, a national school had been established; and there the clergyman absolutely requires that parents of children, as well as the children themselves, will attend church on Sundays, and he makes the attendance of the parents the condition of instruction to the children. On the other side of Cambridge, too, national schools have lately been established, and one immediate result of it had been the reduction, by almost one-half, of the Sunday-school children connected with dissenting congregations in that place. These facts, relating, as they do, to every similar school around my own neighbourhood, are but samples of multitudes which spread themselves round the whole length and breadth of the land. From them, I think it is evident that the people will have secular education. The sole question, therefore, is, whether that education shall be clogged with ecclesiastical conditions, or whether it will be conducted on a liberal and comprehensive plan. If it be conducted by those who adopt the system to which I have referred, we know that it will be clogged with such conditions. It has become the imperative duty, therefore, of the friends of this society, to exert themselves wisely and vigorously for imparting to the people weekday or secular education. The resolution, therefore, refers to the plan of what school education should be, a plan which ought to embody the most liberal opinions. I would not, and, indeed, time would not allow me to go at any length into the statements of what that plan ought to be, to come under the description of the resolution which I have the pleasure of moving. With a view of putting into a practical shape any suggestion in reference to the plan of operation in this matter, I would refer again to what has lately been done, or is now doing, in the locality in which I reside. So deeply has been our conviction of the necessity of some efforts for the establishment of day schools in the villages of the county of Cambridge, that we have lately taken measures for bringing together a conference of the representatives of different churches of baptists and independents throughout the county. That confer-

ence having met and discussed the whole question, resolved on forming, in the first instance, a central committee; in the second, of raising a central fund; the object of which should be, first, to divide the county into districts, single out groups of villages, and plant in the central one of the group a school which should be accessible to the children of the other villages. We thus secured nine or ten district schools within the county of Cambridge, and in maintaining those we show what may be done practically by united and energetic operations. With these observations I beg to conclude by proposing the resolution [cheers].

Mr J. L. PHILLIPS, of Melksham, in seconding the resolution, said:—It may be asked, with respect to secular education, whether some plan of union may not be tried? It has, within my own observation, been tried and has failed [hear, hear]. In the parish in which I live, we had a union school between the members of the established church and the dissenters of all denominations. Seven members of the committee belonged to the dissenters, and seven to the church of England, with the vicar at their head, giving eight to the church. We went on in harmony for some years: at last our schoolmaster, who was a member of the church of England, went away; and then arose the very important question of electing a new schoolmaster. We sent to the British and Foreign School Society in the Borough road. The man who was recommended happened to be a Wesleyan. Our brethren of the church of England said, "No, we do not approve of this man."—"Why not?"—"Because he is not a member of the church of England; and you know, as we are eight, and you are only seven, we shall carry it our own way." [laughter]. "Well," I said, "I think the right reason of the thing is, that we should elect the best man, be he what he may—the man who is best fitted to teach the children committed to his care."—"I shall vote for a churchman," was the reply of some. "Well," I rejoined, "I think that is a very bad reason; a man may be a good man and a churchman, but it does not follow that he is a good man because he is a churchman" [laughter]. When we came to the vote, the church party found that they could not muster eight men, and that the reason for rejecting our candidate would not enable them to command a majority. The result was, that they left our school and built national schools, and now we agree to differ. I believe there are, in all, more children taught, but our school is not in the least degree less flourishing [cheers]. There is another case which teaches the same lesson. In a neighbouring county to that in which I reside, a school was set up, on what are called liberal principles, by members of the established church, and I believe with a sincere wish to act. All children were admitted, and, amongst others, the children of baptists. But at length there came into the parish a curate who was what is called a Puseyite—and he insisted that all the children should learn the church catechism, including the baptists. It was in vain represented to him, that to make them repeat the answers respecting their god-fathers and godmothers was, in fact, teaching them to tell lies. He persisted, and there was an end of union [hear, hear]. He concluded by impressing on the meeting the importance of increased efforts, on account of the spirit of inquiry which was now abroad in the land.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

—SANDERS, Esq., proposed the following resolution:—

"That the cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to the treasurer, the secretary, and the committee, for their valuable services during the past year; that J. R. Bousfield, Esq., be the treasurer, Mr S. J. Davis, the secretary, and the following gentlemen the committee for the year ensuing."

Mr BURLS seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks was also given to the chairman.

The doxology was then sung and the benediction pronounced; after which, the meeting separated.

#### BAPTIST IRISH SOCIETY.

THE thirtieth anniversary of this institution was held at the Hall of Commerce, Threadneedle street, on Tuesday evening, the 23rd instant, and was so numerously attended, that it was necessary to adjourn to a larger room than the one in which the meeting was intended to be held. The chair was occupied by J. TRITTON, Esq.

The services having been commenced by singing, Mr J. SMITH, of Park street, implored the Divine blessing.

The CHAIRMAN then rose, and said:—Many of you were, I doubt not, present at the lecture delivered a few evenings since on the subject which will occupy our thoughts on the present occasion. Not having been privileged to share that pleasure with you, I am unacquainted with the nature of the address then delivered, and with the views and sentiments embodied therein. If, therefore, in the few remarks with which it is my duty to open this meeting, I should unconsciously allude to the same topics, you will kindly excuse the unintentional, but I hope I may say not unprofitable, repetition. It was once observed, as a proof of the vast extent and territorial glory of our country, that on her dominions the sun never sets. Probably the individual with whom that observation originated, did not care to follow out the train of thought it would have suggested to others; but had he done so, had he taken into consideration the condition of many of these possessions which own our sway, and had their state as regards civilisation, refinement, and the light of gospel truth become the theme of his musings, surely, changing from the natural to the moral, he might, without any impropriety, have added, that upon some of them the sun never rises, or at least if it does, it is with beams so faint, so partial, and so inadequate, that



they serve only to reveal, not to disperse, the cheerless gloom around [cheers]. For an instance in point we need not turn to our foreign possessions and colonial dependencies, though their spiritual necessities are probably great—we need not traverse long tracts of intervening ocean—wafted by the breeze of heaven to those most distant shores, where the heathen still sit in the darkness and shadow of death. A voyage not very much doubling the length of the probable duration of this evening's meeting will land us on a shore which affords an unhappy illustration of the remarks I have made. Here and there on its bosom temples are professedly reared for the honour of the Most High. A casual indifferent stranger, gazing on these structures of the past or present age, and beholding the thousands that throng the altars, rendering, not unfrequently, homage with all the earnestness of real, though mistaken devotion, might at once conclude that religion in all its vitality was there flourishing. But there is undoubted evidence that, except in some of the more favoured spots, you might almost as well seek for the living among the dead, as for the pure, simple, spiritual religion of Jesus on the shores of Ireland [hear, hear]. That religion, its gracious founder himself has told us, is known by its fruits, and his word further supplies us with their nature and their character—"The fruits of the Spirit are these—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Are these distinguishing marks to be recognised there? These flowers, so redolent of heaven, so fragrant with celestial sweetness, do they blossom on her mountains? Are they seen in her valleys? Is their perfume borne upon the breezes that sweep over her coasts? Were it so, there would be no need for our meeting, as we do, on the present occasion; or, did we meet, it would be rather to mingle with our brethren in strains of lofty gratulation, than to offer the tribute of our fraternal pity. Were it so, no call would be made on your liberality—no plea would be urged for your personal and relative efforts, and the cry that now comes from her children might be returned with more justice from our own—"Come over and help us" [hear, hear]. Were such the case, who would not seek a shore thus favoured, delight himself with a scene so unusual and so sacred, and tread with lightness of step and gladness of spirit its free and happy soil [cheers]? It may seem absurd almost to say, so obvious is the fact, that not so is the present condition of Ireland. She has seen many changes during 600 years of her recorded history, but the change most needed is yet wanting. There is the same long tale of sorrows, "for ever telling, yet untold." There are the same symptoms of restless discontent and feverish anxiety; there is the same want of some soothing balm to heal her wounds, and allay the bitterness of past and present wrongs. Her situation, thus dark and foreboding, seems to remind us of those sacred voyagers who were driven up and down in Adria, day after day. The darkness that covered them remained impending, while the elements were waging their unmitigated strife, and while neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, the very hope of being saved seemed taken away [cheers]. But then it was, when despair was about to take possession of their spirits, that there stood forth in their midst the apostle of Christ, and told them of that God whom he served, who could clear those clouded skies, and calm those rolling surges; and that the promise given him from above of deliverance, and safety, and peace should yet be theirs [cheers]. So may the ministers of Christ, undismayed by the scene around them, and undaunted by any dangers that may occur, stand forth in this hour of Ireland's darkness and degradation, and proclaim to her sons the glad tidings of salvation and peace. We rejoice to know that some of our dissenting brethren are thus spending their energies in that scene of labour, though it must be confessed with but partial success. There are in the ranks of protestant episcopalians some faithful ministers of Jesus Christ who are similarly engaged; and we would hope that within the pale of another church, whose history is closely associated with that of the country, there are men who can rise superior to outward objects deemed so essential by others, and direct their followers to Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin—thus imitating the example of the man of God who, ages ago, in the heart of Rome itself, preached the kingdom of God, and taught those things that concerned the Lord Jesus, with all confidence. Comparing their labours to the extent of the field they have to cultivate, the means provided with what they require, is it too strong an expression to use, to say that there is an almost total absence of gospel light? What a condition this for a land bearing the name of Christian, and what an eternal reproach to the country with which it is connected [hear, hear]. We have shown sympathy to our own people by raising them houses of prayer for spiritual duties, collegiate institutions for the use of their future pastors, schools for the education and training of our youth; we have established societies for the purpose of promoting the spiritual welfare of Israel's scattered children, to lead back the hopeless and the outcast by the new and living way to the favour of his God, and to bid the very exile of Palestine stay his wanderings beside the still waters and amid the green pastures of the Saviour's fold [cheers]. More than this: we have long borne the gospel to the very ends of the earth; we have borne the cup of salvation to the perishing heathen; we have expended millions of treasure in promoting the evangelisation of the rest of the world; while for Ireland we have absolutely done next to nothing [hear, hear]. This society, in connexion with other kindred institutions, would seek to remove this blot from our national escutcheon, this stigma from the fair fame of our country, and the Christian church, by extending to

our sister island those religious privileges with which we ourselves are so richly favoured; and if we glance for a moment at the means by which it seeks to accomplish this object, we shall find that they alone are adapted to the end desired; and by these means alone, I believe that the regeneration can be accomplished, if they are used with untiring energy, in simple, humble faith, and dependence upon that Spirit whose power none can withstand, and whose purposes none can overthrow [cheers]. It is stated, in the second rule of this society's constitution, that it contemplates a well-organised system of agency; that is to say, a band of Christian itinerants, dispersed in various directions, to proclaim the gospel in all its purity and truth. In this there is nothing of novelty; it was not a plan of action pursued for the first time when the missionary spirit, which had lain dormant for years and ages, was re-awakened, and the founders or early agents of our society went forth to prosecute their works of faith and labours of love; for sacred scripture attests its antiquity, and records its adoption in apostolic times. What but this was enjoined on the listening disciples of their ascending Lord—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?" What but this was pursued when the storms of persecution burst on their devoted heads, and they were scattered abroad, and went everywhere preaching the word? What but this was accomplished when one of the ablest and most successful champions of the faith, reviewing the immense fields which he had cultivated, and recounting the spots whereon he had planted his master's cross, exclaimed, not in the spirit of boasting, but holy triumph, that from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, he had fully preached the gospel of Christ [cheers]? Is there anything in the circumstances of Ireland that shall make the efficient working of the system an impossibility? or, to speak more guardedly, of doubtful success? I cannot but think that there are a sufficient number of labourers, faithful, able, judicious, ministers of the gospel, to go forth, unshackled by the fetters of party—determining to know nothing among men, but Jesus Christ and him crucified—to pass through her towns, and villages, and hamlets—to hallow every scene—and that, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a change most glorious and complete would, ere long, be witnessed—and those who went forth amidst darkness and discouragement, would doubtless return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. There is also mentioned the establishment of schools, the distribution of religious tracts, and the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures—the light of the latter unshackled by human tradition, and the springs unfrozen by the cold hand of reserve [hear, hear]. To these means we attach great importance; for who can recount the number of instances in which the gift of one Bible has been blessed to the conversion of many? A silent messenger of God, it enters the humble dwelling at first unread, unheeded, unhonoured, till some circumstance, trivial in itself, but providential in its results, produces attention to the long-neglected treasure; it is opened—the light of heaven falls upon the sacred page—and truth, stripped of all meretricious ornaments with which the wisdom, or rather the folly, of men has arrayed her, stands forth in all her native purity and loveliness to the eye of the astonished and delighted beholder [cheers]. No sooner is a man convinced himself, than the daily object of his life is to convince others—to bring them to share his sentiments, to realise his joy—thus affording in his conduct a practical illustration of the words of the Christian poet:—

"He tells to all poor sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour he has found;  
Points them to his redeeming blood,  
And says 'Behold the way to God!'"

[cheers.] Who can say where an example so beneficial shall cease to operate? I believe that there are to be found many in Ireland who are willing, like the noble Bereans of old, to search the sacred volume for themselves—to see whether those things which are taught them by the ministers or readers of this society are more worthy of their consideration and their credit, than those duties and doctrines that are inculcated upon them by their own professedly apostolic instructors [hear, hear]. Will you not, then, lend some humble aid to a society that seeks to send to Ireland the word of God, and, where necessary, translated into the native tongue? We have said that other societies are labouring to the same great end; and, so far from being jealous of their success, I am sure there is not one upon this platform to-night who would not give them his kindest well-wishes, and bid them God speed, on their errand of mercy [cheers]. Still to us denominationally and individually seems to come the reiterated command in reference to Ireland, "Arise, and come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty," for her wants are increasing [hear, hear]. So far as we may be concerned, it may be even now the eleventh hour of her spiritual destiny; bleeding with the wounds and weeping over the woes of centuries of sorrow, she makes, through the medium of this society, her pathetic, it may be her last appeal to you [hear, hear]. Torn with unhallowed divisions, the theatre whereon have been displayed the deadliest conflicts of prejudice and passion, cursed by man with all that is erroneous, yet blessed by the God of nature with all that is lovely, what scene is more fitted for the labours, what objects are more worthy of the efforts, of British Christians? He who, so far, at least, as human instrumentality was concerned, planted the standard of the cross on the sultry plains of India proclaimed the freedom of the gospel to the captive children of Ham; and he whose talents and treasures were consecrated to the service of God in helping on the extension of truth, and the final,

overthrow of all its foes, to him Ireland casts her imploring gaze; and strange, methinks, it will be, if he whose heart can bleed for the sorrows of the distant, has no commiseration, no solace, no succour, for those who are perishing, as it were, at his very doors. A gentleman, well known in his day, has expressed a wish that the waters would roll over Ireland, and thus blot it from the map of nations. While far from adopting the spirit, we accept the language of that wish. Would that the waters did roll over Ireland—not, indeed, those of the wide Atlantic that thunders on her shores—not the narrow rivers that intersect her pastures, nor the swelling lakes that lie cradled at the foot of her mountain heights—but those pure and blessed streams which shall fertilise the moral soil, shall sweep away the corruption of ages, and shall bear onward the heir of immortality to the waveless, stormless haven of perpetual peace [loud cheers].

Mr S. GREEN then read an abstract of the report, which consisted, as usual, of highly interesting extracts from the communications of ministers and scripture readers labouring in Ireland, and from which it appeared that the society was steadily pursuing its important objects, and with great success. The receipts during the past year had somewhat exceeded the expenditure: the legacies received had been larger than usual. From the commencement of the year it had been felt that the increasing duties of the secretaryship were becoming too onerous for any London pastor, and Mr S. Green had been invited by the committee to relinquish his pastoral engagements, and give himself exclusively to the business of this society. That invitation, however, he had declined, and Mr Trestrail, late of Cork, had been appointed to the office.

R. STOCK, Esq., then presented his accounts as treasurer, from which it appeared that there was a debt against the society, at the last annual meeting, of £1348 11s. 9d.; but this year it had been reduced to £1152 15s. 2d.

Mr J. SPRIGG, A.M., moved—

"1. That the report, extracts from which have now been read, be received and circulated under the direction of the committee; this meeting, at the same time, cherishing the liveliest satisfaction that the committee have sought during the year to augment the number of ministers connected with the society, and to station additional readers in the larger towns. The meeting, moreover, are thankful to learn that the year's income of the society has somewhat more than covered its expenditure."

It appears from the report that the number of ministers and readers have been increased in Ireland during the past year, especially in large towns. I am delighted that our societies are beginning to feel that the way to evangelise the country is to occupy its principal towns, that from them the light may emanate as from so many important centres to the villages around them. That plan is commended, not only by right reason, but by the highest authority. When the apostles went forth to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, whether in the Grecian or the Roman empire, they entered into cities and towns, seeking there to plant the standard of the cross, satisfied that the waving of the banner would be seen to the utmost parts of the land [hear, hear]. Another point referred to in the resolution is the state of the funds. I approach that subject with a mixture of pain and pleasure. We must all feel pleased that the net income has more than met the expenditure; it is, however, painful to think that a portion of the receipts has been derived from legacies; for however confident we may feel that to our departed friends the exchange of worlds is their eternal gain, yet we cannot but lament the loss of useful and devoted disciples of Christ from that warfare which we have to carry on against the varied powers of evil. I also regret that, in order to keep the expenditure within the income of the society, the former should be so very small. From £2000 to £3000 a year expended on Ireland is but a trifling sum from that body considered to be represented by this society [hear, hear]. At the same time we are permitted to rejoice that we are not labouring without the testimony of God in our favour. Darkness thick and dense has appeared to rest over Ireland. Some have been almost ready to imagine that the time was not yet come to make an effort in that part of our own empire. What, however, can be a stronger proof that the people require light, than the fact that they are covered with thick darkness [hear, hear]? What can be a clearer evidence that the time has come for labour, than the awful consideration that souls are descending into another world without a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its simplicity and purity, although they are accessible to those who possess that truth in all its extent and beauty? I agree with you, sir, as to the possibility, nay, the certainty, that many are finding their way to heaven under the influence of that system, the power of which we so much deplore in Ireland [hear, hear]. I have lived there, and I do not hesitate to say that I have heard fall from the lips of some of the priesthood of the church of Rome statements, as clear and decisive, upon the great leading fundamental truths of Christianity, as could be made. But granting this, I left Ireland with a much more full conviction than that with which I entered it, that the system of Romanism is one that must be broken up and scattered to the winds before the population, as a mass, can know the way of salvation. Under this impression I rejoice in every effort that is made, without asking whether it is carried on by my own denomination or by any other [cheers]. It is a great point gained, that it should be allowed by the community to which I have referred, that it is desirable to circulate the word of God. Let even their edition go forth, and good must be done. There is deep curiosity in the Irish mind. I would not so much quarrel with a system that taught men to think even incorrectly, as with one that prevented them thinking at all. Their own scriptures cannot be widely circulated without ex-



citing inquiry as to the difference between it and our protestant version, and therefore I feel that an opening will be made for the dissemination of the truth to a much greater extent than is now enjoyed. A fact was stated to me to-day, by a beloved brother who has been labouring in Ireland for many years. It cheered my heart, excited my hopes, and led me to look forward with certain anticipation to a better and a brighter day in the history of this and other evangelical societies for the conversion of Ireland. He observed that one of the most pleasing intimations of the present time was a deep spirit of genuine piety and personal religion pervading the members of our different churches. Let that light shine out clearly, distinctly, and powerfully, and it will dispel the darkness, irradiate the mind—and the day will not be far distant when we shall have to rejoice over Ireland as the fair fruit of missionary exertion, and to tell of the triumphs of the cross, not over small and insignificant numbers, but we shall have to reckon, as in other parts of the missionary field, the thousands and the tens of thousands converted to the Saviour, and sitting with meek humility at the feet of Emmanuel [loud cheers].

Mr J. W. MASSIE, in seconding the resolution, said:—I appear in the midst of this audience with unfeigned pleasure, as an intimation of brotherly sympathy with, and Christian confidence in, the Society whose interests have convened you this evening. I rejoice that events are hastening to a union and to a communion of Christians of varied name, in divers parts of the country, and especially in this metropolis [hear, hear]. The convening together of ministers of various denominations to speak at such meetings as this, is an exhibition of the wisdom as well as of the charity of those who conduct the institutions [hear]. I have been with great pleasure a listener to the lucid and eloquent exhibition of principle with which the business of this evening was introduced [cheers]. If, indeed, the chairman were not a hearer of the lecture delivered on a former evening, yet the mind of the chairman and that of the lecturer must have been cast in the same mould, and have been taught to look with the same views on the aspect and the prospect of Ireland. The position of that country is, at present, one of comparative gloom; and on reflecting upon it, we are prone to arrive at certain dark and melancholy conclusions. I have been constrained to look back, not for a few, but rather for many years, to the position of that country under the influence of Christian truth. There were, 240 years ago, in the north of Ireland especially, about ten ministers who preached the gospel irrespective of any connexion with the established church; seven of them were from Scotland, my native country, and three of them puritanical ministers from London. They identified themselves with the common cause of Christianity, and occupied a sphere of labour in the province of Ulster. The residuum of their labours gradually became what has, in more recent times, been denominated the presbyterian body in Ireland. The ten have since been multiplied about fifty-fold, and there are now 500 ministers of the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ preaching in that country those truths which we most surely believe, and who are especially reputed, the general presbyterian church of Ireland. Still, my own views and sympathies lead me very much to question the efficiency of their labours, and their operations generally, in consequence of what I would call, in the language of scripture, the wedge of gold and the Babylonish government which is found among them [cheers]. If they would cast that forth from their camp—if they would place themselves in humble dependence upon the God of Israel, who told the children of Israel that they should occupy Jericho without shooting an arrow against it—if they would trust the resources of the King of Zion, as he has pledged and plighted them by his oath and his covenant, then, assuredly, their strength would be multiplied, and they would become "clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners" [cheers]. There are other presbyterians, however, who, conscientiously refusing this badge of servitude—and it is a pledge as well as a badge—go forward on the same principles that we recognise, and efficiently labouring, and magnanimously suffering privation, poverty, and the taunts of the rich, succeed, by the blessing of God, in the promotion of our common Christianity. Looking back to about the same period of time, there were other men in whom you and I are interested by the reminiscences of our ecclesiastical history. Lord Henry—as good a lord as ever wore the lieutenantancy of Ireland—worshiped his blessed Saviour in what is now denominated a conventicle, received the Lord's supper at the table of an independent church, and cast in his influence as a private Christian, to promote the cause of truth among the people [applause]. Colonel Jones, the then governor of Dublin, was a member of that society of Christians who are now convened; he regularly assembled with the baptist church in Dublin, and proved his submission to the crown of Immanuel by all the benevolence of his private piety, and all the fervency of his secret prayers [cheers]. At that time, England was interested in the progress of the gospel in Ireland. They sent forth men of the most eminent talent, whose writings remain to this day a proof of the character of our forefathers and of the puritans of England. Amongst these was John Howe, Stephen Charnock, John Owen, and others, like liberality and talent, who laboured as the agents of that society are labouring—who preached the gospel faithfully from house to house, and, wherever they went, set up the banner of the cross, and under it proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to the people [cheers]. We are, at the distance of two centuries, only beginning to follow up the work which they commenced. We are but embody-

ried forth, and by which they thought, and wisely thought, that Ireland was to be regenerated. We will go on without ceasing in this labour of love, and thus fulfil the task which they bequeathed us, and perform the mission of our day in a high and noble enterprise. Who can doubt the fervency of Howe? Who can doubt the prayerfulness of Owen? Who can question the evangelical piety of Stephen Charnock? These men and their contemporaries went forth bearing precious seed, which they sowed in tears; but whence comes it that that seed did not grow as it has grown amongst us? There must be some secret, some mysterious cause, that ought to be prayerfully considered. It has not been because there has not been enough of English money expended on Ireland for nominally religious purposes. It has not been because money has not been profusely lavished there. I believe, in my sober judgment, that the want of success has arisen from this—that the good men of England who wished to promote the prosperity of Ireland thought to do the work themselves, instead of employing the Irish people [hear, hear]. The Irish mind must feel that it has a right to develop itself, whether it be in the generous contributions of benevolent societies, or in the great imperial government of the kingdom. Ireland has a right to work for herself [applause]. The cause may still further be found in this, that when good men have been raised up, they have been taught to lean upon England as upon a crutch [hear]. They have been kept in the pupillage of children, and have been trained to imagine themselves the pensioners of English liberality. Your churches in Ireland must sustain themselves [cheers]. The moment they can do that they become identified with all the responsibilities and all the obligations of a bond more sacred, I was going to say, than that of wedlock. So surely as a man becomes a pastor, so surely does it become the church to contribute to his support [cheers]. I would not by this imply that the liberality of British Christians is to be stunted towards Ireland, or that it is to flow in its present narrow channel; but I would have those waters, to which our Chairman referred, flow in a thousand rills, meandering through and fertilising all Ireland, and sending forth the fruits of righteousness; so that they who sow beside all waters may behold the glorious result [cheers]. There has been not only a want of confidence towards the Christians of Ireland, but a want of noble sympathy towards the people generally. Hostility of feeling and religious sectarianism have prevailed amongst the people, so that even liberal and enlightened Roman catholics, who have entertained the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, have been afraid to identify themselves with the English of the pale, lest they should be suspected of merely seeking that identification for the sake of filthy lucre, or other worldly considerations. In the benevolent work in which we are engaged there is required a generous and liberal spirit towards the people of that country. And, query—Do we pray enough for the prosperity of the cause—for the people who are the objects of our philanthropy? What is the manner in which even Christian ministers of all denominations hold occasional and rare intercourse with the priesthood of Ireland? Is it not with the umbrella under the arm that is next the priest, in order to prevent anything like a linking together [cheers]? Is it not with a certain shrinking, as if we contaminate them to rub shoulders with a Roman catholic priest. My firm conviction is, that there are as benevolent men under the garb of Roman catholic priests as there are in this room at this moment [hear, hear]. They are misled; they are mistaken; they hold erroneous doctrine; but we should on that account the more commiserate them, and exhibit the greater readiness to co-operate with them in all those works in which we can act together [applause]. While residing in Ireland, it occurred to me, that it was desirable to promote a spirit of prayer, on the part of Protestant Christians, for the welfare of Ireland, and that the point to which prayer should be directed was, not that the Roman catholics might be converted and joined to our church, but that the priests might be enlightened, and according to the measure of their enlightenment might be constrained, by the love of Christ, to preach the gospel among the people. We agreed to set apart a period to pray for the advancement of truth in the hearts of Roman catholic priests; and the object that I had in view was this, that I might meet them in a kind spirit, and truly sympathise with them. If I may venture to speak my own experience on that occasion, it was, that I looked on the priests with more tenderness than before; and I believed that the work of God was more likely to prosper even among our own ministers and people than before. If we lift up holy hands, it must be without wrath and without doubting; if we pray, it must be in a kind spirit towards those for whom we pray; and the more we pray, the more will a kind spirit be produced, and the greater will be our success [cheers].

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

Mr HARDCASTLE (of Waterford), in moving the next resolution, said: It is now twenty-seven years since it was my privilege to attend a meeting of the Baptist Irish society [hear, hear]. Who can look back for that period without being conscious of the great changes which have taken place? I little thought then, that twenty years of my life would be spent in Ireland. I rejoice to be present at this meeting, and to behold it so numerous. I rejoice that this society has maintained its character as being among the first to discover right principles of action with reference to Ireland, the efficient mode of carrying them into operation, and that it has displayed untiring perseverance. We who have long laboured in Ireland, are not tired; and we rejoice that our friends here are of the same mind with ourselves.

We trust that you will exert your energies still more fully, and, above all, that you will pray for the outpouring of the influences of the blessed Spirit, so essential to the success of any of our labours [cheers]. It will be expected that I should make some statements with reference to Ireland. The topic to which I would direct your attention is one that peculiarly belongs to me, as the senior minister of the older churches planted in that interesting country. During the protectorate, Baptist churches were planted in the south of Ireland; and those in Dublin, Waterford, and Cork, still exist. But, as in England, so in Ireland, there was a long period of spiritual declension in the churches; and when the tone of piety is once lowered, it is not an easy thing to raise it again. This is the case with individuals, but it is still more so in a society [hear, hear]. In latter days, however, God has been pleased to revive us, and for a great number of years our churches have not been in so satisfactory a state, with regard to their spirituality and usefulness, as they are at this day [cheers]. We are labouring with that diligence, and some portion of that faithfulness, which the possession of genuine religion may be expected to impart. We thank God, and take courage at every indication of your sympathy with us. We need that sympathy; and though we are anxious, in a sense, to be independent, yet we must, in some degree, depend upon your kind co-operation for the success of our exertions. With respect to our labours among Roman catholics, we are sorry that we cannot report greater progress than we do. You have, however, in this, a pledge of our integrity. We are not desirous of placing before you anything beyond the simple truth; but God is blessing our labours even in this department. I was recently present at the baptism of two of our Roman catholic brethren. I allude to this, in connexion with the diffusion of the Douay version of the scriptures. One of them remarked, that if we could get the Roman catholics to receive that bible, they would heed the text, but not the notes [hear, hear]. The resolution which I rise to move is the following:—

"That this meeting, in accepting Mr Green's resignation of the secretaryship, desire to express their high sense of the valuable services he has rendered to the society for the last eight years; and, as they concur in the steps taken to secure a secretary who can devote the whole of his time to the increasing duties of the office, the meeting request Mr Trestrail to undertake those duties. They also tender thanks to Mr Stock for the services which, as treasurer, he has rendered to the society, and beg him to continue those services; and the meeting also nominate the following gentlemen as the committee for the year ensuing, with power to fill up vacancies."

As our friend, Mr Green, from whom I have received many favours, is obliged to retire from the office of secretary, I have great pleasure in nominating our friend and brother, Mr Trestrail. I only speak the sentiment of every agent of the society in Ireland, when I say, in the language of that country, with all the veins of our hearts we commend him to your care [applause]. Regretting, as we do, his absence from Ireland, we yield him up with the persuasion that he will be still more useful here [loud applause].

Mr G. GOULD, of Dublin, in seconding the resolution, said:—It is impossible for any man to tread the shores of Ireland without feeling the deepest interest in the moral and spiritual condition of her inhabitants. We behold them groaning under the oppression of a monstrous system of superstition, but we also behold them groaning under the oppression of that most hateful of all forms of Christianity, a state church [loud cheers]. Great is the obstruction to our progress, owing to the general prevalence of Romish doctrine in that country; but I am here to affirm it as my deliberate conviction, that these are but the dust in the balance compared with the great and serious obstacles which the state church presents to evangelical doctrines in Ireland: they meet us wherever we go. We enter the cabin of the poor, we find that they have been visited by the clergyman; and, if necessary, he will even give a bribe to prevent them listening to us, or he will by threats deter them from paying attention to the message of mercy as it falls from our lips. In England you have little or no conception of the mean, despicable arts to which a state church can condescend. In Ireland it has taken a step which must meet with the reprobation of every honest and thoughtful person in this assembly. Just before I left Dublin, a society was formed for the express purpose of hiring protestant servants. It was stated that prospectuses were about to be issued, and through a friend I obtained one. Among other questions addressed to those who recommend applicants, occur these:—In what church does he attend divine service? Does he attend all the services? Does he belong to a Bible class? If he is married to a Roman catholic, state that union. It is required that every person who applies for employment through that society, and which is supported by some of the most popular ministers of the church in Dublin, and is gradually extending itself throughout Ireland, so that it is likely to consolidate within itself all the various servants' societies hitherto established, should attend all the services of the state church. A large portion of the episcopals will not receive a servant into their employment unless he does attend that church; they will not allow him to earn his bread, and then they spit upon and spurn him because he is a pauper [hear, hear]. A person enters a house as a servant; he is a catholic, and it not unfrequently happens that he is goaded to some act of indiscretion, to some hasty expression, and that expression is immediately converted into an argument to prove the corruption of the Roman catholic system to which this servant by profession belongs. But some of the most honourable, the most honest, the most faithful and diligent servants in Ireland are Catholics by profession [hear, hear]. By thus endeavouring to monopolise the recommendation of protestant ser-



wants, the society is adopting means for thwarting the efforts we are putting forth with regard even to Catholics. I will give an instance that occurred in Dublin a week before Christmas. A lady, who bears the reputation of being one of the most pious and zealous members of the state church, had at that time a scripture reader in her employment, and she was about to engage another. What were the terms? That he was to have a sum of not less than ten shillings per week put into his hands to distribute amongst those who would allow him, in preference to others, to read the scriptures in the lodgings at which he was to call. In addition to this, he was to have his pockets filled with tobacco, to be given to the people. This circumstance reached my ears, and I sent to her to say that I would expose her if she attempted to carry out her plan [cheers]. It was nothing but the fear of exposure by name that kept her from carrying it into execution [hear, hear]. This very lady has lately acted in a shameful manner. That man was convinced of the propriety of believers' immersion. He had applied for immersion before; but he was placed in such circumstances, that it was impossible that he could attend the ordinance. He came to Dublin, and applied to me to administer it. Having satisfied myself, and the church being satisfied with his fitness, I immersed him, and on the Thursday following he was dismissed, as his employers would have nothing to do with a baptist [hear, hear]. The next day the scripture reader, who labours in connexion with my own congregation, called upon this lady, to inquire into the facts of the case. She had, positively, the meanness to deny that he was dismissed. Duffy said to her, "There must be a lie told somewhere; Mr Leod has told me that he was dismissed. I have known him for some years, and have never detected him in a lie; but I will go and see him, and bring him face to face with the man who says he never took the message." "Oh! pray do not go to-day; wait till after twelve o'clock to-morrow, and then I shall see the messenger, and will talk with you." "Oh," says Duffy, "madam, I could not eat, or drink, or sleep upon my pillow till I have settled the matter" [cheers]. Away he went, and brought the messenger when least expected, and proved to the lady's face, on the Saturday, that she had deliberately falsified herself [hear, hear]. When means of that kind are resorted to, to prop up a state church, it tells us that the downfall is not far off [loud cheers]. I have another complaint to bring against that church. I had been preaching, once a week, for some time, in a village in the neighbourhood of Dublin—the renowned village of Clontarf. We had been going on very well for some weeks, had a congregation of from twenty-six to thirty, and a little Roman Catholic congregation outside. Within, among the select—the *élite*, of course—were a number of policemen, who were stationed at Clontarf. These men attended regularly, and their hearts were impressed by the truth. The sergeant at that station was himself, for some time, a regular attendant. Things looked cheering, and I went on, let the weather be fair or foul, because I expected to meet a warm-hearted and thankful people. But, after a few weeks, I missed the sergeant, and on inquiring the cause, I found that the clergyman had been with him, and had represented that it was dangerous for me to be admitted into the parish, that I preached the most fearful doctrines, and that it would be a dreadful calamity for him to attend and receive my instructions. He besought him to use all his influence with his men to prevent the subordinates from filling up their stations in this room. He withdrew from the place, and, hitherto, permanently so. What art, think you, under the dictation of a state priest, did he resort to? One of the most active policemen, who felt it to be his privilege to come to that place, was immediately appointed to be doing duty at the very hour when I should be engaged in preaching, in order to prevent his attending [hear, hear]. Others were drafted off to Kingston, and others to Phoenix park. Has the plan succeeded? Thank God it has not [cheers]. I am informed that there are not fewer than five policemen at that station who have received the truth in the love of it [cheers]. We have a great deal to contend with from this church, but the opposition we meet with only makes the people bind their principles around their heart. The dread in Ireland is this—that if we have not a state-paid clergy, we shall necessarily have a state-paid Catholic priesthood. The notion has gone abroad among dissenters, that this will be the inevitable result of upsetting the establishment. But I do not believe that there is a single Catholic priest in Ireland who would take a penny from the state—they have been too much indoctrinated with voluntarism by the assiduous labours of Daniel O'Connell to permit it. Indeed, some of the Catholics turn round upon those who call themselves dissenters, and say, Do you mean to assert, that the Christian minister is to be supported by the voluntary contributions of his own people. If we answer, Yes, they inquire, What do you mean, then, by the *regium donum* [hear, hear]? What do some of your ministers in England mean by receiving such a paltry pittance as *regium donum* [hear, hear]? I would to God we could wipe the stain from our brow, and stand to vindicate our principles with a clear conscience—that there was not one belonging to us who acted in the slightest degree in violation of them [cheers]. With regard to our own denomination, it may be right to say that our efforts are attracting the attention of Roman Catholics as well as that of the church party. The former, however, have somewhat of a feeling of respect and regard for us, because there have been some amongst us who have been faithful to their principles in days gone by. It is important that we should take advantage of this; but I do not believe that we shall do so unless we

increase the exertions we are putting forth. You must send men to stations that are asking for them; but there are several who have petitioned for agents for a long time, and petitioned in vain [hear, hear]. One or two remarks have been made about Father Mathew. I am convinced that he does not hold all the restrictive notions of his church; and, as a proof of it, I may mention, that he has recently directed the people to the word of God, as able to make wise unto salvation [hear, hear]. Did I not fear that it would weary the meeting, I would read a letter which he has written on this subject. By this morning's post I have received another letter written by him; and in it it is stated, that he has circulated, out of his own private resources, several thousand copies of the Douay version of the sacred scriptures among his Catholic countrymen [hear, hear]. Besides this, however, Dr Croly, archbishop of Armagh, has circulated 30,000 copies of the scriptures out of his own pocket since he was appointed to the archbishopric [cheers]. These are delightful facts—and since there is a disposition on the part of the people to read the Scriptures, by all means let us avail ourselves of it. I will mention one anecdote bearing upon this point, and conclude. A few weeks ago, one of our readers tapped at the door of a poor dwelling; and, on his doing so, a voice said to him, "Come in." On entering the place, he found a poor woman stretched on a pallet of straw; and, on going up to her, he found that she was a poor ignorant benighted Roman Catholic. After a short time, he pulled a Bible out of his pocket, and read those beautiful words, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The poor creature turned to him, with tears in her eyes, and said, "Your honour, do the Sisters of Charity know of this blessed book; and do they know that you are going about reading it to poor people in this way?" "Of course," he said, "they know that such a book is in existence." In her simplicity she said, "Surely, if they knew of such a blessed book as that, they would not come to poor old creatures like myself to read us such queer stories as I have been listening to this morning." You can get at the hearts of the Irish people through the Irish language [hear, hear]. There are upwards of three millions of the Irish people who speak no other tongue than that of their native land, and yet I will venture to say that not twelve sermons are preached every Sunday in that language [hear, hear]. I ask, is that right? Ought such a state of things to be allowed to continue [hear, hear]? It was by an English statute law that the Irish language was put down, and it is by English Christian liberality that that law must in effect be repealed [cheers].

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

Mr TRESTRAIL (of Cork) moved the following resolution:—

"That this meeting, looking at events transpiring in relation to Ireland, and observing the theories proposed for her benefit in political, social, and moral points of view, desire to record their deepening conviction, that Christians of this country are bound to multiply their efforts to promote the preaching of the gospel in the sister country, inasmuch as by this means it may be expected that God will graciously work for the overthrow of her errors and superstition, and for the conversion of her people to the knowledge and faith of Christ."

He said:—In what I am going to say, I promise you that I will endeavour to be as brief as possible. Let me first remark, that it is a very great comfort to me, in pleading for the cause which has been so ably advocated this evening, to find that I am in an Irish meeting out and out [laughter]. In the first place, we wanted a large room, and we first got into a small one [laughter]. In the next place, we have adopted a report which has not been read. In the next place, all the speakers were to be Irishmen; but all are found to be Englishmen, except one, who is Scotchman [renewed laughter]. In the next place, there is a vast amount of good-humour in the meeting, and that is Irish all over [hear, hear]. In the next place, we have got an Irish meeting in England. In the next place, in nominating the committee, Mr Green's name was left out, which was certainly a blunder; and, to crown all, we are rather better than £1,100 in debt. If these are not features of an Irish meeting, I do not know that I ever attended an Irish meeting before. But if it be an Irish meeting, I am glad to perceive that it is a good one; and I am deeply sensible of the very kind, affectionate, and cordial manner in which I was received the moment I made my appearance before you. Some time ago, the committee thought proper to set before me the reasons why I should go over to Ireland and engage in the work. I then determined—and, since that period, have endeavoured to devote my whole life, with all the energies which I possess, to that work; and I have uniformly refused all offers which would bring me back to this country. It may be asked, "Why, then, are you here now?" For no other reason but because the committee and my brethren in Ireland believe, that by undertaking the office which I have done, I shall advance the interests of the Irish Society, and thereby promote the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom in that benighted land [hear, hear]. It now remains with my brethren in the ministry, and the congregations over whom they preside, to say, whether or not that intention shall be carried out [hear, hear]. On behalf of the Treasurer, who has incurred such great responsibilities, and on behalf, also, of the committee, let me say, that we throw ourselves, in the Irish fashion, upon your hearts [cheers]. We seek not merely to secure their sympathy for that degraded and oppressed land, but to cherish in them a strong determination that they will do something more for Ireland than they have done hitherto; and that, according to the recom-

mendation of Mr Masse, they will not forget the cause in which we are engaged, when they come before the footstool of divine mercy and grace, and lift up their hearts to God in the words—"Thy kingdom come" [cheers]. Now, having said so much, let me say a few words in advertence to what has been said in the *Patriot*. Somehow or other, when we stand up to say anything encouraging about Ireland, we are looked upon with a little suspicion [hear, hear]. Three years ago, I stood upon the platform at Finsbury chapel, and there made some statements respecting the Irish people, which struck some as being of a rather strange character. They did not, perhaps, think that I was telling a story, nor, I hope, would they ever do so, having too much confidence in my integrity to form such an opinion; but, nevertheless, they thought that there was some little mistake, or that I viewed things through a magnifying medium. I now appeal to the statements of my friends Dr Urwick, of Mr King, who is the pastor of the independent church in Cork, to Mr Smith, of Newry, and to many others, who have been long engaged in the work of Ireland, all of whom substantiated, in the main, the statements which I had made [cheers]. Brethren, cast aside suspicion, and believe what we say [cheers]. Treat us, in this respect, with something like generosity, and believe that we have no unworthy object. What object, what end, can we have in view in the statements we make, but to induce you to increase your exertions, because we hope that those exertions will not be thrown away—to increase your liberality, that the number of your agents may be increased—and to increase your prayers that the divine blessing may be poured out from on high [cheers]? There is a good gentleman whose name I do not know—I wish I did, I wish we could always find out who those are who give themselves anonymous names in newspapers—I mean "Philo-Hibernia." Now, in reply to this gentleman, Mr Smith wrote a letter, which was filled, not with opinions, but with facts, facts drawn from the society with which he is connected, facts also having some reference to things which I had done, and to things which I had said. "Philo-Hibernia," through Mr Smith, put some questions to me. I thought it would save time and trouble, perhaps, just to answer Mr "Philo-Hibernia" myself; and I promised to give him some information on meeting my brethren, who were about to assemble in Parsonstown. Just about the time when I was to go to this place, I received the painful intelligence of the death of my loved and venerable mother; and although there was nothing in it to fill me with bitter-regret, she having long been an humble and devoted follower of Jesus Christ, you may easily conceive that I was not in a very fit state to take a long journey on receiving that intelligence [hear, hear]. However, I wrote to my brethren with the view of answering the questions which had been put to me in the newspaper. The first question was, "Did Mr Trestrail and his colleagues in Ireland ever preach in the open air?" I had stated that we had done so over and over again, and yet this question was inserted in the *Patriot* [hear, hear]. My reply to the question was "Yes;" and I gave the names of Mr Macarthy, Mr Bury, and several others, who had preached in the open air. Taking the whole of the gentlemen who were labouring in the south of Ireland, the chief Roman Catholic district of that country, there was only one who had not preached in the open air. All the society's agents, with the exception of Mr Gould, at Dublin, had done so. One of them said, "I have preached so frequently that I don't know how often;" another said, "About thirty times;" another, "Six or seven times;" another, "Very frequently;" another, "Frequently;" and the last to whom I put the inquiry, said, "Occasionally, in conjunction with other Christian members, on board vessels" [hear, hear]. Then comes the question, whether or not they were molested? During a period of four years there had occurred only one case of molestation, and that happened in the city of Cork. With whom did it originate? A man went to the expense of a shilling to buy a cat, and having bought it, he induced another person to fling it at one of our brethren who was preaching in the open air. This, of course, caused some uproar. But who was the party that went to this unnecessary expense? Why, he was a protestant [hear, hear]. He has since died; I do not know whether he gave any signs of repentance. We could hardly wonder if molestation did take place on the part of the Roman Catholics, when a protestant is found to take the lead [hear, hear]. Here, then, brethren, we have a number of missionaries, all of whom are in the habit of preaching in the open air, and there is only one instance of molestation, and in that single instance the molestation comes from a protestant. Brethren, can you believe us after that? Just give me an answer to that question [loud cheers]. Aye, that is a right good answer, and I will report it to my brethren engaged in this work. Let my brethren who have come from Ireland go back and state what answer was returned to my question [a laugh]. Well, then, next comes the question, whether any Roman Catholics attend our ministry? Why, I was rather surprised, I confess, at a question of that kind being put, for if they did come regularly, would they be Roman Catholics? One brother said, however, "At two stations visited once a fortnight, eight; i. e., two at one, and six at another." The answer with respect to the other brethren, to whom I have before referred, is as follows:—"All the other brethren unite in this general reply—viz., Roman Catholics generally attend our ordinary ministrations, but we cannot say how many nor how frequently the same persons attend." There is great difficulty in gathering statistics on a subject of this kind; but I have no doubt my brethren will do their best, if we are obliged to bring forward this kind of evidence, and these state-



ments, in reference to numbers, in order to remove unbelief. I hope, however, that what I have brought forward on this occasion will induce you to rely upon our integrity, and to believe that we do not in any degree overstate the truth [cheers]. Well then, it may be asked, "Have you, Mr Trestrail, preached in the open air?" My reply is, "Yes, a great many times." I have done so in Cork, and in many other places; and a friend of mine did so in Cork every Sunday afternoon, during two summer seasons, when the weather would permit, and he was not molested on a single occasion. The only instance of molestation which I myself ever experienced came from an individual who threw a sod at me. Why, it was but a soft bit of turf, and it did me no harm "at all at all" [a laugh]. And when I went out again, after tea, many persons were waiting for me, and one of those who had been present said to me, "We hope your worship will not think us all bad entirely; we hope you will not put us all down as ruffians because a scaramouch and ragamuffin lost his manners, and indeed he was tipsy at the same time" [laughter]. Now I have also been asked, if there have been any instances of usefulness by means of our ministry among Roman Catholics? One brother says that his ministry has been blessed during four years to the conversion of seven. Is that nothing [hear]? If the blessed Redeemer came down to die in order to save souls, and if he said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his soul?" is it not matter of thankfulness that one of your agents has been made the instrument of adding seven individuals to the number of the redeemed? From another brother I have no return; another says, he has three or four candidates at present, and another speaks of two. I think, then, after all, that we have something to encourage our hearts—something to inspire us with a hope—something to induce us to believe that there is no cause for despair, even in reference to our aggressions on that great master-piece of iniquity and sin with which we are brought in contact. But my brethren have requested me not to lose sight of the following important facts:—First, there is the fact that all the Roman Catholics converted do not enter our churches. I cannot, on this occasion, for want of time, enter into a statement of the reasons; but I apprehend that just in the same manner as it was considered a great triumph, after seventeen years, to snap the chain of caste in India, so in the case of Romanists openly joining our churches in Ireland, there is an equal difficulty and an equal triumph. The next point which they wish me to notice is, that the brethren receive visits from some who do not appear in our assemblies. Can you think that these men of God will allow these visits to go over without keeping steadily in view the great object which they should ever have at heart? In the next place, "they have continual opportunities of conversation, which they do not fail to improve." In the next place, the readers have far greater opportunities of getting at the masses, which opportunities they do not fail to improve. In the next place, "the difficulties in the way of Roman Catholics evincing any disposition to quit their former connexion, cannot well be realised by those unacquainted with the system and the country." Finally, they mention, "the amount of benefit conferred on the souls of Irish Protestants." It will not do, you must remember, to leave our small churches entirely destitute of the preaching of the everlasting gospel. I am confident that there is not a person in this assembly who would not deeply deplore such a result [hear, hear]. Our friend Mr Massie has urged that it is very desirable to procure Irish agency. We must first, however, pay off the debt; that is the first business to which we must devote ourselves; in the next place, we must keep up our regular contributions, in order to support the existing agency; and, lastly, we must endeavour to establish and sustain an institution for the education of Irish young men, who shall be sent out to preach the gospel [cheers]. You have applauded our views; I now tell you how to carry those views into effect. First, pay off the debt, and then give us your money to support this college. We can find tutors; for I have been asked by individuals who are desirous of devoting themselves to the work, to assist them in doing so [hear]. I know that in some of our colleges there are men at this hour who are anxious to be sent to Ireland if the committee are able to send them. I have received a letter this morning from one of these individuals, and I believe there are others both at Bristol and at Stepney. If the brethren send me on a tour into the north, I hope that I shall be permitted to see some of the students at Bradford, and be able to find some who are willing to devote themselves to missionary labour in Ireland. Now, if you will only have the kindness to assure us of your assistance in the manner that I have mentioned, we shall go back to our several spheres of labour greatly encouraged [cheers]. I intended to read an extract from the journal of one of our readers, but at this late hour I must abstain from doing so. Permit me to add, however, in reference to a statement of my friend Mr Gould, that not merely is Father Mathew desirous that the Scriptures should be read in Ireland, but the whole Roman Catholic hierarchy have recommended that the Douay version of the Scriptures should be circulated [cheers]. I am sorry that I am not able to read to you their recommendation [a gentleman on the platform, "It is here"]. Well, if it is here, that is enough [hear, hear, and laughter]. Now, allow me to say that I believe it is owing to our agents, our readers, and our schools, in connexion with similar societies, that that change has been brought about in Ireland [cheers]. You ask us for fruit. It is not too much to say that that is a fruit of our exertions: nothing but the lateness of the hour prevents

me from proving that such is the case; I must content myself with bearing testimony to the usefulness of the readers in my own district [cheers]. In conclusion, I hope you are convinced that Ireland is a right and fit subject for Christian philanthropy, kindness, and benevolence. I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to these few remarks, which, from the limitation of time, have necessarily been of a very discursive nature; and I beg to assure you that your sympathy will have the effect of stimulating me and my brethren to increased exertions in this great cause.

The collection was then made. While it was proceeding,

Mr DORNEY moved, and Mr PAYNE seconded, that the name of Mr Green, the late secretary, should be added to the list of the committee.

Carried unanimously.

Mr JOHN BATES (of Ballina), in rising to second the resolution moved by Mr Trestrail, after one or two introductory observations, said:—I have laboured about ten years in Ireland, and I have always regarded the field as sufficiently wide to call for all the activity, all the benevolence, all the devotedness and zeal of a Christian man [cheers]. I went to Ireland in order that I might proclaim the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I trust that from this great and important work I shall never deviate, either to the right hand or to the left. You have repeatedly heard this evening, in reference to Ireland, that it is the land of darkness—the land of superstition. We believe that nothing but the gospel of the blessed God is calculated to remove the evils we deplore, and so to raise the Irish people in the scale of morals, that they may take an honourable standing amongst the nations of the earth. It is true that our progress up to this point of time does not appear so great as in many other parts of the world; but there are signs on the surface of society, which we cannot but regard as indications that our principles are being diffused, and as promises that they will soon break forth and bring large accessions into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ [cheers]. It is evident that this great and important work is the only remedy for the evils of Ireland. We must tell the people of their depravity, and we must tell them that there is nothing within the compass of their carnal mind whereby they can become the authors of their own conversion. We must direct them to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true foundation of the sinner's hope. We must endeavour, also, to set up in that country the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in all its majesty and glory. We would say to you affectionately and earnestly let Ireland be the starting-point. You lament that popery is spreading; Ireland, with its popery, is open to you as a field of missionary labour, and let Ireland be your starting-point. Throw all your life and energy, and devotedness and zeal, into the missionary work there, and rest assured that the principles and convictions which are at work in that country, will make all those who cherish error finally receive the truth, and the gospel will spread with mighty energy. But, at the same time, we say, be not deceived. I do believe that the great body of the Roman Catholics are better than their system; but if you imagine that popery will ever love the principles of civil and religious liberty, depend upon it you are greatly mistaken. We know that the light which we have spread, and the principles which we have set afloat, have compelled many of them to be better than their system. But yet, what does their principal leader say? He says, "Let England be for England, let Scotland be for Scotch, and let Ireland be for the Irish." Now, I ask you, what does this mean? Does it not mean, "Let Ireland be Roman Catholic still" [hear, hear]? Does it not call upon us to proclaim the gospel on the right hand and on the left, and to make that gospel known far and wide [hear, hear]? I will only observe, in reference to the field of labour where God has placed me, that there have been seventy or eighty individuals united to the church of Christ; twenty of them were Roman Catholics. Three of them have been educated, and are now being trained for the ministry [cheers]. We have reason to hope, in short, that the Lord has crowned our labours with success. In reference to myself, I may be allowed to observe, that I have circulated twelve or fourteen thousand tracts on the right hand and on the left. The people begin to think. There are persons here and there who rise superior to the system of mental slavery in which they have been trained. Error may struggle hard, and last long; but it carries in it the seeds of destruction. Truth is immortal in its nature, and the principles of the gospel, as revealed from heaven, shall finally triumph and reign over the nations of the children of men [cheers].

The resolution was then put from the chair, and adopted by the meeting.

J. DRILTON, Esq., proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was seconded and carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN said—I assure you I have felt very great pleasure in presiding over this meeting. In the greater part of what has been said this evening I cordially sympathise, although I presume the chairman of an Irish meeting is not expected to hold himself responsible for all the speeches of Irish orators [hear]. This is the first meeting of the society which I have ever been privileged to attend, though the society itself is one in whose operations and success I have always taken the deepest interest. I may perhaps add, that it was one of the first societies to which I gave a trifling subscription. I earnestly hope that, during the coming year, success will attend the efforts of its agents; and when you meet again in this room, may you have occasion to adjourn to another, on account of the want of space for those who have assembled.

The doxology was then sung, and the benediction pronounced; after which, the meeting separated.

#### BIBLE TRANSLATION SOCIETY.

The fourth annual meeting of the subscribers and friends to this institution, was held at New Park street Chapel, on Wednesday evening, the 24th inst., and was very numerously attended, J. L. Phillips, Esq., in the chair.

The meeting having been opened by singing, Mr Kent, of Shrewsbury, offered up prayer, after which

The CHAIRMAN rose and said, that amidst the various assemblies which met at this season of the year, none were more important than the one which now convened them together; they were emphatically assembled to promote the cause of truth. They were called upon to support their missionaries in distant lands, who were engaged in the great and important work of translating the holy scriptures, and unless they supported them, they could not be upheld. The reasons given for casting these missionaries upon their own resources, who had hitherto been supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society, was an additional ground why this Institution should uphold them. They must not be left to die or to sink into obscurity for the want of support; they were men of whom they need not be ashamed—men who stood before the world, and whose works were known to all religious communities. In looking over the tabular statement presented by the Rev. Hartwell Horne, of the translations of the word of God into the various dialects of the earth, he found that the translators most successful as to numbers, were the baptists [cheers]. They had reason to thank God and take courage, that they had been enabled to go on so far with this great work. It was inconsistent for the members of the established church to object to the translation of the word *baptizo*, inasmuch as an appeal could be made to their own prayer book. It was stated in the service for administration of the ordinance of baptism, that the ministers were to dip the child or the adult person, both one and the other; instead, however, of complying with that direction, they not only did not do it themselves, but objected to others doing it, and at the same time objected to the missionaries translating the word in the same way that they themselves had translated it [laughter]. It was not, however, for the baptists to inquire into the motives of the advocates of the other system; it was enough for them to be satisfied with their own [cheers]. They might sometimes illustrate the point by seeing what was done on the other side. A school-fellow of his had been colonel in a West India regiment, with 800 men under his command. There was great danger of the men being converted to the Roman Catholic faith: the chaplain, who was anxious to prevent that sad occurrence, consulted with the colonel as to what measures had best be taken. The latter remarked, "I will make short work of it; I will order out my regiment, and you may go down the ranks and baptise them all" [laughter]. He did so, and the colonel stood god-father to the regiment [renewed laughter and cheers]. The colonel related that fact to a clergyman in his (Mr P.'s) neighbourhood, who said, "I do not know how you brought your chaplain to submit; I should have rebelled against your authority." The Colonel replied, "When I was in the West Indies, I should have liked to have seen any chaplain that would dare to differ from what I commanded [laughter]. But, after all, I merely did what you do at home—I baptised them first, and taught them afterwards" [laughter]. The clergyman was puzzled to answer the Colonel, and at last he rather thought that he had done right [laughter]. But this was a serious and a solemn subject [hear, hear]. He hoped, however, that he should be excused for stating that fact, which he had had from the Colonel's own lips. Whatever Christ commanded it was their duty to perform. They needed no other law—they wanted no other inducement—and, if they believed that Christ had commanded immersion, it was their duty to follow it, and, in so doing, they would enjoy his blessing [cheers].

Dr STEANE then read the report, which stated that the American and Foreign Bible Society had favoured the institution, as in former years, with gratifying proofs of cordial and zealous co-operation. When made acquainted with the desire of the baptist missionaries in Calcutta to prepare a version of the entire scriptures in Sanscrit, they granted a sum of £500 towards that object. They had also remitted 3000 dollars, in furtherance of the principal existing translations. Encouraged by pecuniary assistance, Dr Yates had undertaken the new work. The results of the controversy which had taken place in the *Patriot* had placed the importance of a Sanscrit version beyond question. The report then detailed the various editions printed during the past year, which amounted to a total of 45,000. The distribution had kept pace with the preparation of the sacred books, and equaled, or rather exceeded, the distribution of any previous year. Grants had been made, to some extent, to esteemed missionaries and others belonging to other sections of the Christian church. Towards the diffusion of the word of life throughout India, the committee had had the satisfaction of making grants to the amount of £1500. The receipts of the year, in annual subscriptions, donations, and collections, had amounted to £1622 15s. 5d., being a small increase upon the year preceding.

Mr W. BROCK rose, and said that he could not begin to do his proper business without speaking the emotion of his heart at that moment, which was one of the purest joy that he had almost ever known, of a certain kind. He believed that those who had not been to the meetings held during the present week had lost a great deal [cheers]. He believed that they had never been favoured with so much of gen-



uine and Christian brotherly kindness, as they had during the present anniversaries. He regarded that as a token for good—that while they were placed by circumstances in the vanguard of the Christian army, they were learning to hold together that they might with more vigour and effectiveness discharge the work which God had devolved upon them. He hoped that each one would hold his own opinions and express them. He did not reckon that Christian brotherhood, which required that one brother should succumb to another, till they all licked the dust [cheers]. He was requested to move that the report be received, printed, and circulated; and, he might add, read [laughter]. If ever a report deserved to be read, it was the one to which they had just been listening. He had almost thought that he was at Exeter hall, hearing the report of the British and Foreign Bible Society [hear]. It spoke first of one version, and then of another, and of grants of 500 and 600 copies to other societies. They were following most respectfully in the way of the large society [cheers]. He began to follow the report, in order that he might give something like a running comment upon it; but he soon found that that was impossible, for he could not bear in mind either the figures or the facts. It would form a very capital document to read at their breakfast tables; for that was the only place where the entire family could become acquainted with it. The report had stated that one gentleman had been his own executor, and instead of giving a legacy to the society, had contributed a sum to the funds. That was the best thing that people could do with their money. Let them put it into the hands of the treasurer to the Bible Translation Society, and then there would be no law suits about it after their death [cheers]. He looked at Mr Daniell while the report was being read, and he thought that he would be proud were he in his place. That gentleman had most kindly and heroically called upon the churches to aid in contributing the necessary means for the Sanscrit version. He was glad that an excellent missionary of another society had said what he thought respecting that version, and he wished that other people had said what they thought. He gave honour to Mr Gogerly for making his statement in the *Patriot* newspaper, where other persons had an opportunity of gainsaying it, and then, when it was gainsaid, Mr Gogerly, as well as he could, admitted that he was wrong [laughter and cheers]. The *Patriot* had given currency to what Dr Halley had said, and it should now give currency to what the baptists said [hear, hear]. In that matter they had not had a fair chance. The errors, or whatever they wished to call them, had gone before the public eye, and he hoped that what would now be said would go through the same channel, and leave an impression on the public mind [cheers]. With respect to this society, there was a time when people would not look at it, and he believed that there were persons present to-night, who were not found at its first meeting; but they were now disposed to regard it favourably. He had some half dozen things to say respecting it. The existence of a Bible Translation society had not been, and was not now, unnecessary [hear, hear]. He wished that to be felt by the entire meeting. The versions which had been made were faithful versions. Persons not of the baptist communion were positively using the Old Testament, and they were willing to take the New, if they could let them do what they liked with the single word baptize. But though the versions had met with the approbation of the whole religious world as to their fidelity, yet they could not be circulated. The aid of the Bible society was sought, but they declined to give it. The fact had been denied, but its truth was apparent that the Bible society gave the early versions support, when the word *baptizo* was translated in the same way that it had been done since [hear, hear]. It was not till the year 1813 that they had any qualms about it [laughter]. Difficulties were then raised, in consequence of certain missionaries making a complaint; and, as the Bible society would give no further help, this society became essentially necessary, and the baptists were thrown upon their own resources—the finest thing on earth to do with any man [laughter and cheers]. He believed that the number of faithful copies now in circulation, would not have been issued if they had not taken the ground that they had adopted [hear]. He felt that, if ever anything was done decently and in order, it was the formation of the Bible Translation society [loud cheers]. In the year 1834 the first intimation was circulated that something must be done, and in 1836 five hundred signed a protest, most respectfully worded, to the Bible Society. Not a word could be uttered in disparagement of the respectability, the honour, and the truly religious manner in which the whole thing had been commenced and carried on [cheers]. Then came Mr Hinton's letter, which had never been answered. That gentleman showed that if they transferred *baptizo*, they must also transfer *tetragmenoi* [laughter]. That would not have been understood, and, but for the efforts of their own body, he questioned whether a hundred people would have known what *baptizo* meant. He read the other day, in the epistle of Jude, a word which, if transferred, could only have been rendered *tartarised* [laughter]. A principle was involved; if they transferred one word, why not transfer another, and then what sort of a Bible would they have? Then came Dr Steane's memorial, and to that there had been something like an answer. Everything had been done which Christian feeling could suggest, in order to persuade the Bible Society to retrace its ground, but without effect [hear, hear]. The principle was invulnerable, that every word should be translated. If he were to go into a British school and tell the boys that he was about to translate a

book to the best of his ability, and put the question to them whether he should translate the whole, or a part, they would at once reply, "the whole" [cheers]. He held in his hand an extract from a speech made at the last meeting of the Bible Society, but he did not give any names. "One word more," said their friend, "upon the principles"—that was an important word in this speech—"on which our brethren render the word of God into the languages of the heathen. I can strongly assure you, with a good conscience, that my brethren recognise constantly that great principle of your noble institution—fellowship with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Let them look to the report they had heard this evening, and ask whether the baptists were not practically carrying out the principle of fellowship with all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Other denominations applied to them, the baptists, for the scriptures, and they let them have them, and if they would increase their applications a hundred-fold, they should be complied with. They were ready to work, heart and soul, in every practicable way with all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. The speaker went on to say, "On the great terms of salvation there is no danger of disagreement, for here we are all one; but on those truths which no man maintains to be essential to salvation, those truths on which the wisest commentators may differ, those truths on which the most conscientious and devoted of Christian men may disagree, on these minor matters, while we accept the generous support of the British and Foreign Bible Society, we pledge ourselves to an honourable observance of its great distinctive principle. The principle upon which our brethren proceed is 'a principle as rotten as a pear lying on the ground since last autumn' [laughter]—to merge the minor considerations of individual opinion, and still more of denominational distinction, in the higher principle of mutual love, mutual forbearance, mutual respect, and a generous universal Christian catholicism." He (Mr B.) would not like to say what he felt about that; but, whatever might be the cheering with which it was received in Exeter hall, it would not bear the calm consideration of any man who understood the genuine principle of evangelical Christian union. There was much poetry—much fiction in the terms of "mutual forbearance, mutual love, mutual respect, and generous universal Catholicism" [cheers]. He believed that such language was essentially mischievous. The wisdom that cometh from above was first pure, and then peaceable [cheers]. Tell him not about the higher principle of mutual love; what must every translator do after all, but make his individual opinion the last thing by which he decided the meaning of any given word? It was a solemn thing to be a man—to be a Christian minister, but a far more solemn thing to be a translator of God's word [cheers]. As to "merging denominational distinctions," their translators were not the promoters of denominational distinctions—their society was not a confederation for promoting them. They were confederated not for the sake of a denomination, but for the sake of what they held to be the truth [loud cheers]. Then, as to the essentials of salvation—it was a solemn thing to talk about essentials connected with salvation. He ran a risk of being misrepresented, but he would speak his mind, and say that he considered the subject of the doctrine of non-essentials to be most dangerous. He would warn them against talking about non-essentials; let them have union where there was a oneness of judgment—a oneness of heart; and then God would be honoured. The baptists were totally unsectarian [laughter and cheers]. That was not very generally known, but it was true. If the word *baptizo* were translated, who would not be able to use it? They must take the opinion of the majority, not the minority. All the members of the Romish church could use it—the German churches could use it—the members of the Dutch church could use it—and all the members of the English church could use it. If, therefore, he were sectarian, he was in a glorious majority [cheers]. But if that translation were adopted, they must throw off the authority of the church. The word, according to the Roman catholic, meant, "to dip." Then why did they not dip? Because the church dispensed with it. Then came the Greek church, and the church of England; they said it meant "to dip;" but the church had the power to decree rites and ceremonies, and set it aside. If the baptists could carry their plan into execution, the largest section of Christendom could use their bible. He had another complaint to make against the British and Foreign Bible Society. Why had they not been faithful to their own position? In one language they had translated the word, "to sprinkle;" in others, "to wash"—"to make a washing"—"to cross" [laughter]. They said they must adhere to their principles—they would not have the word translated at all; and yet they were circulating versions in which it was translated [loud cries of "Hear, hear!"]. The baptists were not fighting for sectarianism, but for great principles—not for forms, but essences—not for that which was ephemeral and transitory, but for that which entered into all the future history and advancement of the cause of Christ.

Mr CALEB BIRT, in seconding the resolution, said he apprehended that he expressed the sentiment of the meeting, when he asserted that the formation of the Missionary society was the best thing that the baptist denomination ever did—the best thing for the heathen world, for the church at large, and for itself. As regarded the heathen world, it applied the best remedy, and exhibited the last hope for man in his extreme wretchedness. Of all the calamities which afflicted the earth, idolatry was the greatest. Fire, plague, and the sword, and famine, had slain their thousands; idolatry had slain its

tens of thousands; and such was the bad eminence that it assumed among the evils which afflicted the world, that even religion became a curse. Not only was it "the abominable thing" with the God of truth, but it was hated by the God of love. Let them not regard idols merely as wood or stone; they were personifications of the powers of evil; and nothing could cast them down from their high places but the unadulterated and undiluted gospel [cheers]. In vain would the conqueror try the power of the sword, or the legislator the effect of laws. It had been the best thing also for the church at large. Let no man take this glory from the baptist denomination, that it was the first to render palpable the great truth, that whereas distinct churches are constituted to be the lights of the world, in proportion as a denomination is multiplied by churches, so the responsibility of the body at large augments; and, as union was strength, the combined operation of the whole body should be brought to bear upon the high destinies contemplated in the gospel of Christ [cheers]. And it had been the best thing also for itself. The reflex blessings attending their missions had abundantly compensated them for every effort and every sacrifice which they had made in their furtherance. They had risen to a higher elevation in their Christian standing, and they had been "twice blessed," in what they had communicated, and in what they had received [cheers]. But if the formation of the Missionary society were the best thing which that denomination ever did, he hesitated not to say, that in the grand conception and wondrous execution of the translation of the scriptures, they had excelled themselves [cheers]. It was here that they had formed an alliance with the mightiest instrument for the furtherance of their grand and ultimate purposes. The adaptation of the scriptures for the purposes of instruction, for the illumination of the mind, and for the swaying of the heart, invested them with a power which no other volume could possess. This was not speculation; it was truth. From the more distant regions of the east, where the voice of the missionary had never been heard, had men come, drawn by the attractions of the sacred volume, that they might be instructed more perfectly in the things that accompanied salvation. And if this were necessary for the spread of the truth in its converting power, how indispensable was it to the confirmation of those who had received the first principles of religion [hear]! Where would be the native agents of their missionary societies without the Bible in their hands? How could the perfecting of the saints be carried on in the eastern world if the inhabitants did not possess the sacred volume [hear, hear]? To render their work permanent, they must take possession of the eastern countries by the hold of scriptural truth, and then might they anticipate a most glorious era, when China would become in reality what it was now in poetry, and in arrogant assumption, "the flowery land, the celestial empire." Through the translation of the scriptures they had conferred the greatest benefits on the church at large. To all sections of the universal church they had acted the part of pioneers, leveling mountains, raising valleys, and forming a highway in the wilderness for missionary labours [hear, hear]. Surely the mighty work of the translation of the scriptures had been a benefit to themselves [hear, hear]. It had given to their denomination a crown of immortal flowers, which should never fade away. Then came the question, were they to surrender that work which was at once their ornament and their defence [hear, hear]? Why, the translation of the scriptures had become an appendix to their missionary institutions. For a quarter of a century the British and Foreign Bible Society had displayed towards them unwavering kindness, and had given a liberal support to the institution. When that support was withdrawn, were they to surrender the work [cheers]? They had trusted too much to others; they owed it to themselves not merely to continue, but to enlarge, the work of translation; they owed it to the many baptist churches in continental and insular India to continue the translation of that rich charter of blessings which had passed into their hands; and more, they owed it to the millions amongst whom a thirst for the word of God had been awakened when their fathers first entered on the work, and foretold its future extent [cheers]. Now serious thoughts mingle with this part of the subject. They should remember that, in their contact with heathenism, they did not assail senseless matter, but a sentient, moving being. If heathenism did not recede under the pressure of their advance, it would retrace its steps, and occupy the ground from which it had been expelled [hear, hear]. He conceived that the fervour of their attachment to the Bible Translation Society would be in proportion to their appreciation of the worth of the sacred volume. If they did in truth perceive, if they were really sensible of, the connexion which existed betwixt the sacred volume and eternal life—if they could sincerely utter those words, "This is life eternal, to know thee, the living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"—then they would not for a moment contemplate the surrender of that mighty and beneficent work [cheers]. No; the work to which they were called was trying to their faith, and it might be to their patience; but let them remember that they owed it to Christ Jesus to continue faithful. There was a time when a devoted missionary, his feet having hardly pressed the Indian soil, could exclaim in earnestness of spirit, "If I were worth a million of money, I would give the whole for a single copy of the Bengalee scriptures." A few men, in the power, in the faith, and in the love of Him who had ascended up on high that he might bestow such gifts on men, had made provision for the wants of numbers. They were following in their steps,



and it was due to Him who had raised up a Yates to carry on the work which a Carey could no longer pursue, that they should persevere in their efforts; and if they did so in the proper spirit, then would they hear from Him who occupies the middle throne, the words, "Let no man take thy crown." The field was large, but it was full of promise. They were spreading the triumphs of truth, and opening sources of divine consolation to an afflicted world. The time was advancing when the whole world should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and if they were found faithful in the work of disseminating the Scriptures, they would share in the joys of the harvest. Was this enthusiasm? No; his words were those of truth and soberness. They had the assurance of prophecy that the Lord of hosts should bring about this result through the love, the faithfulness, and the self-denial of his people. With these sentiments, he felt the most cordial satisfaction in seconding the resolution.

The resolution was then put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

Mr JONATHAN WATSON moved the next resolution, which was as follows:—

"That the supreme excellence of the word of God, and its divine adaptation to the moral necessities of man, stamp the work of pure Bible circulation with a character of the most exalted benevolence."

He said, the controversial part of the subject had been so well handled by Mr Brock, that there was no necessity for him to dwell upon it [hear, hear]. He apprehended that that gentleman had fully and for ever laid asleep that part of the subject, having satisfied the audience of the necessity of their moving, as a society, separately from the Bible Society, in the circulation of the word of God. It was, however, of the last importance, that when they appealed to an audience like that, they should make them fully alive to the fact that they were perfectly right in the steps which they took. Doubtless there were many persons present who were not competent judges as to the correctness of their translation of that part of the word of God in which baptism was spoken of; but there was a variety of means by which they might come to a satisfactory conclusion, if they were conversant with the sacred originals. He would mention two things. In the first place, let it be borne in mind that when King James called for a translation of the Bible into the English language, he gave the most strict injunctions that the word "church," and the word "baptism," should not be rendered into the plain English that they meant [hear, hear]. That fact spoke volumes. He knew very well what would be the consequence if the words were translated so as to be understood by the people; he knew very well that the "church" would then mean the whole body of the faithful; and equally well did he know that the whole nation would embrace the view of baptism which distinguished their denomination [hear, hear]. It ought to be known by that audience that in Scotland this question was in precisely the same condition as in England. When the Westminster assembly of divines were sitting judgment on the standards of the church, the grand question came at last, whether the word "baptised" should be rendered "immersed" or "sprinkled;" and it was an important fact, that the question was decided against "immersed," by the casting vote of the Chairman [hear, hear]. If these were not sufficient proofs that the baptists were right, he really did not know what evidence would be sufficient [cheers]. He felt satisfied that they were right, and that they had a just claim, therefore, to be assisted in the translation of the scriptures in the manner which they adopted. On this ground he now appealed to the audience, in the name of the society. But still more did he appeal to them on the ground of the supreme excellence of that book, in the translation of which they were engaged. Surely, it was unnecessary to remind that audience of the claims of the Bible, or to remind them that it was the book of inspiration. When the author of any other book had given it to the world, he had nothing more to do with it; but when God published his book, he accompanied it by the immediate presence of his Holy Spirit; it was, in fact, the grand instrument through which that Holy Spirit breathed into the souls of men. The subject of this resolution was the supreme excellence of the Bible. It was the grand and glorious remedy which God had provided for the ruin of mankind; it was that by which he brought man from the brink of everlasting perdition, and raised him to that glorious condition in which he placed those who knew and loved him. If they knew the worth of the blood which had been shed for their redemption, it behoved them to communicate the glad tidings to every human being. Let it be borne in mind, that the Bible was that book by which alone a mighty transformation could be effected on the face of society. They were appalled by the wickedness around them. The grand measure of relief, that which alone could make the wilderness blossom as the rose, was the knowledge and the love of the sacred truth "as it is in Jesus." If they believe this, let them assist in the circulation of the scriptures; and let them also offer up their prayers for those who are engaged in the work of translation. There was no work under heaven so important, so serious, so awful, in its responsibility, as that of translating the word of the living God. Let them beseech God that he would pour out the Holy Spirit on those who are engaged in this work; that he would enable them to prosecute it with fidelity, zeal, and love—that they might give a fair and full exhibition of his word to the nations of the earth [cheers].

Mr T. F. NEWMAN, of Shortwood, seconded the resolution. He said that it presented a truth so obvious, that it did not require a single word of advocacy or of commendation. What could be compar-

able, as an act of benevolence, to the act of making known to man the infinite benevolence of the Deity? The word of God was the revelation of his infinite mercy to mankind, and of the only method by which a sinner could attain to peace and holiness. While he regarded the book of God as the greatest boon which could be bestowed by one man on another, he did not feel indifference to the present condition of his fellow-men [hear, hear]. There was nothing which he hated so much as the cant of compassion for the souls of men, while their bodies were left uncared for [cheers]. But the gospel gave the promise of the present life as well as of the life to come; and it raised the whole character and prospects of the sinner. What was any man in the midst of all the enjoyments of life, if he never came into the presence of the Father of spirits, and realised communion with him through the blood of his Son? He was a poor wretch though seated on the mightiest throne on earth; but he was not poor—he was unspeakably blessed, though the meanest cot on earth were the place of his abode, and though his garments were tattered from head to foot, if he knew the Saviour as his own, and could look beyond the sufferings and conflicts of time to the haven of everlasting rest [cheers]. He thought that the elements of perpetuity were stamped on this society. He heartily assented to the sentiments advanced by Mr Brock, though he had once, indeed, held a different opinion. He had once feared lest they should occupy an invidious position; but there was a little more false delicacy about this than he was willing to retain [hear, hear]. There were no men who were less open to the change of sectarianism than those to whom they had listened that evening—none who had in them more of the milk of human kindness [hear, hear]. They were not to be charged with sectarianism, merely because they carried out the principle upon which every honest man on the face of God's earth ought to act—the communication of the word of God in a literal form to all the inhabitants of this province of God's vast and unlimited empire [cheers]. He concluded by expressing his ardent wish for the prosperity of the society.

The resolution was then put and carried; after which, the collection was made on behalf of the funds of the institution.

Mr D. DAVIS (of Swansea), in rising to move the re-appointment of the committee and officers of the society, expressed his warm attachment to this institution. He rejoiced that he belonged to a denomination that had a full, perfect, and complete translation of the entire word of God [hear, hear]. Some were afraid of the translation of the word "bishop," some of the word "church," and some of the word "baptise," but the baptists were not conscious that they had anything to fear from the translation of the whole. He believed that all the opposition with which their public institutions had had to contend, had ultimately been attended with benefit and advantage. Attempts had been made by their own government to curtail their liberties, by confiding the education of the people to the hands of a certain class. But had not that been the means of extending education, and of raising up schools in every direction? He would almost venture to say that the Anti-state-church conference had arisen out of that measure [loud cheers].

Mr J. SMITH seconded the resolution, which was then put and carried.

Dr STEANE moved, and G. LOWE, Esq., F.R.S., seconded the vote of thanks to the chairman, which was put and carried by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN having briefly acknowledged the compliment, and expressed the pleasure he derived from attending the meeting.

The benediction was pronounced, and the meeting separated.

#### BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The fifty-first anniversary of this institution was held at Exeter hall, on Thursday the 25th inst. The spacious hall was well filled. W. B. GURNEY, Esq., took the chair.

The services having been commenced by singing, Mr J. WATSON of Edinburgh implored the Divine blessing.

The CHAIRMAN then rose, and said:—What an honour is put upon us in being permitted to engage in any exertions for the promotion of the Divine glory! But have we sufficiently realised the privilege and the duty expressed in those words of the apostle, "We are allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel?" That is not confined, I apprehend, to the apostles, but extends to every Christian, to every one to whom the word of God has come. It is a trust—a sacred trust; but there is a privilege connected with it, and I hope that we all feel it to be a privilege to be engaged in this cause. It is a trust that might have been committed to angels, but it has been graciously committed to men. May we all feel the responsibility that rests upon us, faithfully to discharge it. It is not thrust upon us, but we are allowed of God to be put in trust. The importance of a trust depends upon the value of that which is entrusted, and the benefit it may confer upon others; and great is the condemnation resting on those who do not faithfully discharge that trust. What a blot it is upon the character of a trustee that he has deprived the widow and the fatherless of their rights—that he has not fulfilled his trust! But if that is the feeling with regard to trust in civil life, how much more should the impression press upon our minds in relation to the gospel, and to the communicating that gospel to those who are perishing for lack of knowledge. When we look to the dark places of the earth, full of the habitations of cruelty—when we hear of all the cruelty, the vice, and the degradation oppressing those lands, can we satisfy ourselves with withholding from them that gospel! on the contrary,

shall we not feel it our privilege faithfully and diligently to fulfil our trust? This trust attaches to each of us. The responsibility devolves upon the committee of faithfully employing the funds confided to them, so as to accomplish the object in view to the greatest possible extent. Their trust is limited by the amount of your contributions. You will hear that, in the course of the last year, the operations of the society have been extended to new countries. Stations had before been entered upon somewhat in violation of the then existing rule, but that rule having been altered last year, every place out of the British isles is now open to the exertions of the society. You will learn with pleasure that we have a mission in France, and several stations in Canada. The latter are designed not merely to benefit the natives of the soil, but those who have emigrated from our country. I trust that, as new scenes are opened up, you will enable the committee to occupy them; that we shall receive a fresh impulse from this day's meeting; that the committee will be enabled greatly to extend the operations of the society, so that if we are permitted to meet in a future year, that extension will afford matter for thanksgiving. We feel interested in the prosperity of all missions. We feel that we have one common cause; let us be concerned to do our part, and let us rejoice that others are doing theirs.

Mr ANGUS then read an abstract from the report, from which it appeared that the income of the past year had been £21,840 12s. and the expenditure, £22,831 1s.

The society had sent out, in the course of the year, nine missionaries with their families to occupy important posts of usefulness. Eight teachers had also been sent from Jamaica to Africa. Six others, who have been accepted, are waiting to occupy their respective spheres of labour; and four brethren and their wives had returned to their respective stations after temporary absence. 45,000 volumes of the Scriptures have been printed during the year, and the works in hand amount to 47,760 more. The Scriptures distributed in the year amount to 47,247 volumes. These, added to previous distributions, make a total of 230,837 since 1831. In India a greater number of converts has been added to the churches than in any previous year of the society's existence; and the educational establishments were reported to be highly flourishing. In Jamaica the number of members was 33,644; and in the Bahamas, 521 persons have been added to the churches, whilst the schools have considerably increased. To Trinidad and Hayti the committee are soon to send additional missionaries. A new mission had been commenced at Morlaix, in Brittany; and the Rev. J. M. Cramp had been sent out to succeed Dr Davies, as tutor of the college at Montreal in Canada. The report, which closed with a powerful appeal to the sympathy and aid of the supporters of the society, was listened to throughout with deep interest by the large and highly respectable assembly convened on this occasion.

Mr WILLIAM BROCK rose to move,—

"That the report, of which an abstract has been read, be received; and that this meeting offers its grateful acknowledgments to Almighty God for the encouraging measure of success which he continues to bestow on the Baptist Missionary Society and other kindred institutions, and adverts with special interest to the progress of the African mission, and to the commencement of missionary operations in connexion with this society in Europe and the North American colonies."

For the last half-hour I have been thinking, and thinking with great earnestness, of a statement that appeared in a far-famed *Edinburgh Review* of some thirty-five years ago, an article, the animus of which should have led its writer long since to his knees. I remember that this sentence occurred in that review. It was an article on missions, specially having reference to what has been done by "Brother Carey," as he was sarcastically called by the reviewer. The sentence I refer to was this:—"Let any respectable man read the report of this mission"—so say I [cheers]; I believe persons were little aware, or that they but little anticipated, that that reverend reviewer would have ever gone before the movers of the first resolution, recommending the public to read their report. We are quite glad to be able to refer to that statement of his, and to trace the dealings of God's providence up to the present time, to us, and I think the prognostics of that review must be reversed. I think it is becoming a matter of popular belief that missions will be remembered when the governor-general will be forgotten [cheers]; and if I do not mistake, the gates of Somnauth, with all the apparent immortality they have recently obtained, will have to lick the dust before the piece of elm board, now in the Museum, upon which Carey inscribed with his own hand both his efforts and his name [cheers]. Our society exists, notwithstanding all that was said about its rapidly approaching non-existence; and it exists under circumstances that should lead every one of us to thank God and take courage. It should lead all such persons as I have referred to to think of what God has done. It is enough to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men [cheers]. Why, there were royal princes denouncing us, and there were lordly legislators scorning us, and sagacious senators invoking the power of the British arm to put us down; and there were learned moralists, who said, very much like the enemy of the ancient Jews, "What do these feeble Jews do? If a fox go up it shall break down their walls;" and there were cloistered moralists, and reverend reviewers, who talked of Carey and other people as apostates from the anvil and the loom; but yet, notwithstanding all the opprobrium and the scorn, thank God, here we are, with an increasing exchequer, with increasing spheres of usefulness, and having to say, to the honour of his providence and grace, that our difficulties have one after another been taken out of the way. Our opportunities of labour have been extended—on every hand trials have been sanctified; men valiant for the truth have been raised up—caste has been broken—souls have been saved. God has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. And we should be glad. I



deem it we should be just as glad when mercies come, as we were earnest in our entreaties before they did come; and the joy of the Lord should be our strength. I have been thinking of the contrast between this room and the room at Kettering, that some of us had the pleasure of seeing some two years ago. I have been thinking of what passes now in certain places, and what passed then. Why, there rose an honourable man, who had been in India, in his place in the British House of Commons, and he said, "I actually heard this Carey tell the Hindoos, from his hoghead, that they would go to hell if they did not believe in Christ." He is called a Christian senator, and yet he could find fault in the House of Commons with Dr Carey, for saying that the heathen would go to hell if they did not believe in Christ, and he closed his address by saying, "Sir, ought this to be allowed?" [laughter and cheers] Then he was followed by another man, who had never been to India; I should have questioned if he had ever been anywhere else but in St Stephen's, who said that nothing but some new moral power, hitherto undiscovered in the moral world, would be adequate to pull down these consolidated fabrics of superstition and vice. Where was the man's New Testament? Not where it ought to have been—that is, in his heart and upon his lips, for if it had, he would have recollected that the gospel is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. Our mission was wanted to set people right at home. I do not know by this time what would have become of certain great truths in the estimate of the British public, and the estimate of British churches, if it had not been that our missionary societies had been the expounders of some all but forgotten truths. But here we have to thank God that we were told sarcastically, thirty-five years ago, to read the report of the mission. We are prepared to say the same thing, but with deep-toned conviction that any man who will read that report, when it is printed, will be constrained to say, there is the finger of God. I have much pleasure in moving that it be adopted. I have looked it over in quietude, and there is not a word or a syllable I would have altered. It told us by implication that the necessity for our missionary operations remains altogether undiminished. We find that we have done little, but doing that little has made us feel that there is a great deal more to do. I believe that the success which God has given to us—the elevation to which he has conducted us—has only shown with more clearness that the work we have undertaken to accomplish is not a trifling work; not that to which any one of us would be adequate if we were not sustained by that power that belongs to God. We have only begun to do a work—we know not when it will be finished; but we know that it will be finished, and that they who sow and they who reap shall rejoice together [cheers]. We have learned, moreover, from that report that we have the right means in hand. We heard an admirable sermon yesterday morning, and there was an admirable intimation that we should not be looking after "new agency." This is an age, not of new agency exactly, but an age in which we hear a great deal about "new agency." Our excellent friend told us to be jealous of it all, and to take care, having tasted the old wine, not to think the new was better [cheers]. Now about the means. What do we do? We translate the scriptures, and God has blessed us signally in that movement of Christian effort. There are missionaries on this platform, and there will be missionaries on other platforms, prepared to say that to our brethren they owe a debt of gratitude, which before the world they will acknowledge. Not, however, after all, that we deem them under obligation. We are glad that they should use our translations as we use them. We are pleased as well as honoured in the opportunity we have of making common effort with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth [cheers]. Then there comes the education of children. You have heard of the schools the missionaries have under their care. A lady laid me under an embargo to say something about female schools in India. I stated that I did not see how I could do it; at the same time let it be remembered that female schools in India, upon which an excellent minister of the church of Scotland [cheers] will perhaps say something by and by, are of the last consequence—the greatest possible consequence—and to these our missionaries do, in every direction, give all the aid in their power. Then there comes the preaching of the gospel—that old-fashioned instrumentality, but that instrumentality which nothing has superseded, although it has been tried again and again. What was it that destroyed the rites of Judaism? It was the preaching of the cross. What broke up the barbarities of Druidism in our own land? The preaching of the cross. What was it that interfered with all the abominations of paganism? It was the preaching of the cross. What is it that will overthrow the abominations of popery? The preaching of the cross. We are old-fashioned enough to keep to the old instrumentality. Our report speaks of the translation of the Scriptures—that is one thing; of the education of children, so that they may read them—that is another thing; then the preaching of the gospel, which is the best thing of all [cheers]. There are men who tell us we must not preach the atonement. I should like to know what a missionary would do without the atonement. A missionary of another society tried it at some place in India. He said, being dinctured with certain notions that I shall not specify, that he should not preach the atonement—he should teach the people there was a God—he should teach them the power of the priesthood—he should just initiate them into all the mysteries of the sacraments, and when they were properly initiated, he might perchance speak to them

of Christ. That has come to pass; there are many who are preaching the same doctrine, and telling us not to exhibit the soul-saving doctrine, that Christ came into the world to save sinners. It seems that Elliot was mistaken when he went to the red Indians, and Philip when he went to the Hottentots, and Carey when he went to the Indians, and Moffat when he went to the Bechuanas, and Williams when he went to the South Seas, and Burchell and his compeers when they went to the West Indies. It seems those men should have descanted about the being of God, and then every man among the Hottentots would have been unsanctified to this hour. They might have told them of the power of the priesthood, though I do not know that any I have mentioned had any notion of a priesthood [laughter]. But they had not so learned Christ; and wherever they went they acted on the truth, that the gospel was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Those men, however, who say we are not to preach the atonement assert that it is so sacred that it is not to be looked at by common eyes, nor to be listened to with uninitiated ears. I am sure you will detect the fallacy, and detect its sentiments. It is just as though some men, claiming to be the priesthood, should inclose the light of heaven, or shut up the very atmosphere which surrounds us, in some holiest of all, and then, in awful tones and priestly cadences, discourse to the uninitiated about the unrivaled beauty of light, or the precious value of air. Suppose such a case as that—is it not a wretched mockery? It embodies a daring presumption against the God from whom they came. It is a fallacy to talk about the value of the atonement, and then keep it back. Why reveal the light? The man in darkness would say, "Its beauty is its action upon my eyes." Distribute the air; the man in the black hole in Calcutta would exclaim, "Its beauty and its value are its operation on my lungs." So with respect to the atonement of Christ. There is no value in it as it lies folded up in our bibles. It is only when it is brought by God's Spirit to open the understanding and the heart, that it becomes the power of God to salvation [cheers]. Therefore let us bear up our brethren who are going everywhere preaching the cross—not concealing it—not reserving it—not modifying it by any sacerdotal interference, nor adulterating it by any sacramental grace [cheers]. If it should come to this, that tradition should be regarded as authority—that the Lord's supper is to be an expiation for sin—that baptism is initiation into the Trinity: if it should come to this, you may recall your missionaries—break up your printing presses—shut up your schools, and before an inaugurated priesthood, all our institutions will have to lick the dust. We keep, therefore, by the old instrumentality with which the apostles went everywhere, and, going everywhere, God made the word efficacious to the salvation of men [cheers]. Then look at the success, and adopt the report. We have had much success—men of every country have been converted to God. Think of Clarence, and think of a church with forty-four members and a congregation of 500 people. Whose heart does not beat with thankfulness when he hears of such a fact? Go to India, and hear that we have baptised more than we ever baptised before, and then hold up both hands for the report, and, what is better, read it *verbatim et literatim*, and do not let it lie uncut and unread in your own closet or on your own tables [cheers]. Adopt the report—then read it, and it will be one of the best means for ripening your conviction of the value of missionary institutions. With these remarks I shall move the proposition entrusted to my care; but before I do so, allow me to state that I have received another commission. It is from Mr Peggs, a man who has done much for India, and done it well [cheers]. I will read what he says. "I want you, in your sermon at Surrey chapel or your speeches, to make strong reference to British connexion with idolatry in Ceylon." He has sent me ample materials for making strong representations about that matter. I will read what he says. "This connexion prevails chiefly in Candy, the interior of the island, which was subjugated in February, 1815, from which time the British government has exercised the same authority in religious matters as was previously exercised by the Candyan kings. It appoints the principal Buddhist priests of the interior province; confirms in their appointments the priests of the palace at Candy; appoints the lay chiefs of the principal temple dedicated to the worship of the Hindoo deities; incurs the annual expense of the procession at Candy; pays the expense of other heathen festivals, and sanctions "devil dances" in the name of our Sovereign lady the Queen Victoria. "It is high time for us to hearken to our brethren who have been invoking our sympathies in the first place, and then our interposition in the second. He goes on to say, "The services of the temple," which he mentions, "are conducted by forty priests, twenty of whom belong to the Malwatta, and twenty to the Asgiri. Two priests are regularly in attendance, one year from the Malwatta, and the next from the Asgiri alternately. These priests are appointed by the Maha Nayakas of the respective establishments, but must be confirmed in their office by the agent of government. From six in the evening to the same hour in the morning, a soldier, in his regular uniform, belonging to the Ceylon Rifle Regiment, which is composed chiefly of Malays, and officered by Europeans, mounts guard in the lower court of the temple. The Malagaw contains various articles of considerable value, such as books written upon leaves of solid gold, the intrinsic worth of one of which cannot be less than £2,000 sterling. On a recent occasion, when these treasures were privately exhibited, one of the priests was heard to declare that as they were the property of government, it was right that the go-

vernment should protect them, and he argued that the government was bound to maintain their religion, from the simple fact of its retention of these sacred treasures. The evils of this state of things is incalculable. Heathenism has at this moment an influence in Ceylon which it would not otherwise be able to maintain, from the support it receives through the patronage of our Christian government." I am sure that Mr Peggs's statement will make its own proper impression. I hope we shall be able to do something, but it will not come to much till we can prevail on the British government to let all religions alone, [loud cheers]. If they will let all religions alone then they would by no means dare to take up a false religion, but if they undertake one, I see no way out of the difficulty of their undertaking all. Therefore I say, that I do earnestly implore the interposition of Him who is head over all things to the church, that the interposition of man may come to an end. There are two things to be done: one is, that false religion may be deprived of its chief support; and the second, that true religion may be detached from one of its most unsightly accompaniments, and thus we may get rid of the greatest drawback, and the greatest drag upon its chariot wheels [loud cheers].

Mr JOHN McLEAN, of the Wesleyan connexion, on rising to second the resolution, said, I have great pleasure in appearing here to connect myself publicly with the operations of this great Christian institution, and I confess that my pleasure is rather heightened than diminished by the consideration that I belong to a different Christian denomination from yourselves [cheers]. I am quite sure that our common Christianity calls upon us to come more closely together; and, without requiring from either any compromise of our peculiar sentiments, it demands from both that manifestation of Christian affection, and that co-operation in effort, which, I must say, I have ever felt it to be at once easy and delightful to render [cheers]. I feel considerable difficulty in entering upon any general remarks in so large an assembly as this. Time was when I possessed greater nervous power to appear before such an audience than I do at present. If I had retained the infection which I caught from the manly speaker who preceded me, during his exceedingly spirited and able address, and in that condition had proceeded to address myself to the business of the occasion, although I could not even then have hoped to make any approach either to the manner or the spirit of his excellent address, I feel persuaded that I should have succeeded much better than I am at present likely to do. My esteemed friend who preceded me put himself into a very favourable situation for delivering a good address by the manner in which he commenced; taking up, as he did, that sort of objection which a certain review put forth against the operations of this society a long while ago. Although it does not appear to be to the credit of one's Christian feeling, and although it certainly is not to the credit of the fertility of one's invention, yet it is a fact that the absence of this sort of opposition in these times, to minds peculiarly constituted, creates one of the difficulties which are felt in delivering an address on an occasion like the present [cheers]. For example, we never hear it said anywhere that any class of the human family is so deeply degraded that it is of no use to attempt to elevate them, at least by that old-fashioned instrument the preached Gospel, to which Mr Brock has referred as the best and only instrument ordained of God for accomplishing the conversion of a lost world. We hear no one say that there is any part of the human race so utterly debased that any attempt to elevate them by the instrumentality of the Gospel must be utterly vain. But if any did say this, then we could point to the reports of the different Christian missionary societies which have been established. We could tell them that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ had been preached, in the very way in which we preach it at home, to the most degraded of the human family; that the lazy Hottentot, who was once described as being less than a man, a sort of connecting link between man and the brute, by the preaching of the Gospel, and without the employment of any other instrument, had had his inert powers stirred and impelled into activity, and had turned out something more dignified than an organised clod; that he had been proved possessed of sensibilities and feelings; that he had displayed all the common sympathies of our nature; and that he had become inspired by all the noblest hopes of our glorious and common Christianity. If they were to tell us, as they used to do long since, that we were really disturbing the heathen in his happy repose; that there was a large class of persons in the heathen world much better off than we are in this country; and that, in the words of a senator some time back, "it was monstrous to represent certain classes of the heathen as being in so deplorable a condition;" if they were to make those allegations and to offer these objections, we could prove to them, from the reports of your own and other societies, that the heathen in no country, that the heathen under no combination of circumstances, however favourable, are so happy as not to need the Gospel of Christ. We could make it manifest to them that, under any circumstances, the heathen are, "of all men, most miserable." We could tell them that they were wandering amid the most painful uncertainties on the most important of subjects, "ignorant," as one of them expresses it, "whether this life is the preface to the volume of existence, or the whole volume of that existence; whether death is the period or only a parenthesis of being." We could tell them that they are especially ignorant of that name, whereby alone we can be saved—the name of the Lord Jesus. We could tell them that the heathen, even those of



them who seem to be most happy, worship gods who are in their character monsters and tyrants; that they worship in places which are in fact brothels and slaughterhouses; that they practise every kind of evil, and put decency to the blush. And then we could refer to the happy condition of Christian churches in India in contrast to the degraded condition of the unconverted Hindoos, as a complete refutation of that species of objection to missionary efforts. In fact there is no kind of objection which has ever been made which cannot now be satisfactorily answered by the mercy of God, from these reports. We can show that the word of God has proved effectual to the overcoming of every form of evil with which it has had to contend. There is, indeed, so little done that we have great need to attend to the affectionate and strong admonitions at the conclusion of your report. There is so little done that we must pray, as we are called on to pray by that document, for an increase of success. But, at the same time, there is so much done that, in addition to the gracious promise of our covenant-keeping God, we have, in matters of fact, a pledge that all which God hath ordained will certainly come to pass, and that it is easy for it to be accomplished by the means which he has provided—[cheers].

The CHAIRMAN said, reference has been made to the great change which has taken place in public opinion with respect to missions; and I would add one circumstance which came within my own knowledge at the time of the renewal of the East India Company's charter in 1813, when a struggle was made for obtaining for missionaries the right of going to India. Previous to that time, they had gone rather by sufferance than by the authority of the law, and petitions were therefore presented to the House of Commons on the subject. Mr. Fuller, in company with one of our friends in London, went to a county member belonging to a noble family, and asked him to present petitions from the county which he represented. His reply was, "I will present your petitions, gentlemen, if you wish it, but I cannot support them. You are acting from good motives, I am sure, and you are very good men, but you are much mistaken on this subject. I have been in India, and I have seen these things myself. The religion of India which you are attacking is a most beautiful religion. Of course I am a member of the church of England, but if I were to change my religion I should become in that respect a Hindoo" [hear, hear]. I only mention this to show what sort of opinions prevailed on this matter a few years ago. This gentleman was a respectably-educated and high-minded man; but never, perhaps, having witnessed any of the cruelties with which the Hindoo religion is accompanied, he considered it a beautiful system.

The resolution was then put, and carried unanimously.

MR. GEORGE HENRY DAVIS, of Bristol, moved the next resolution, which was as follows:—

"That this meeting has heard with pleasure of the continued co-operation of the churches in Jamaica in supporting the West African mission, a co-operation the more generous and praiseworthy that it has been given by churches which have had many pecuniary difficulties to contend with, while they have nobly fulfilled their pledge to maintain the cause of religion among them without pecuniary aid from the society."

He said: I presume that different individuals in this room were differently affected by various parts of the report to which we have listened. There are those to whom India is the most attractive point of the missionary field—India, where our first victories were won, where we have prepared the "sword of the spirit" for all succeeding sections of the Christian army to wield, and where many of our best and our bravest warriors sleep. And for such as feel the greatest interest in the continent of India, was it not a cheering fact that one hundred and seventy-seven immortal men have been added to the churches during the last year [hear, hear]? Was it not an interesting fact that 47,247 copies of the Holy Scriptures have been spread throughout that extended and interesting land [hear, hear]? Others there are, again, who look with greater affection to the sunny isles of the West, where we have seen whatever is noble in daring, whatever is brave in suffering, whatever is wise in council; where we have reaped the richest fruits of missionary toil; where our churches no longer need the fostering hand of their mother, but have increased to the full strength and vigour of youth, and now constitute themselves active missionary associations. Was it not interesting to hear, although we had received no report from one third of the churches, that 1,881 members had been added by baptism to the church in the island of Jamaica alone [cheers]? But, Sir, to me, and perhaps to many of the rising generation in this audience, the part of the report which was most interesting was that which referred to the rising mission in Western Africa. Circumstances made the island of Fernando Po deeply interesting to my mind, even before it became associated with the honoured names of Clarke and Prince—those noble brothers, the excellent qualities of one of whom are so admirably counterbalanced by the meekness and gentleness of the other [hear, hear]. Sir Fowell Buxton told me, in a conversation which I had with him prior to the formation of the African Civilization Society, that the publication of his book was delayed because negotiations had been entered into with the Spanish Government by our own, for the purpose of obtaining possession of that island, this being considered necessary for the subsequent operations which he had in view for the suppression of the slave trade. Those negotiations failed, and Fernando Po is still under the sway of the Queen of Spain. This we cannot but deeply regret. For now that the Roman Catholic church, fulfilling the prophecies that went before her as to

her extent and her end, is exerting herself with renewed vigour, and pouring her missionaries upon every spot to which Protestants have carried the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ; and now that the Popery of Spain is again being revived under the influence of the returned mother of the Queen—revived to such an extent that a law has just been passed making it penal to publish in the papers anything contrary to the interests of the holy Catholic and apostolic church; and now that the slow bigotry of the Spaniard is likely to be acted upon by the vivacity of the French; now that France has undertaken to become the chevalier of the church of Rome; now that under her tricoloured flag is the crucifix rising, not only in Syria, but also in the island of Tahiti; surely we have reason to fear least, should our missionaries, as we think they will, conduct their operations with the success which has attended them on the island of Jamaica, Popery will exert itself to extinguish the light which has been permitted there to kindle [hear, hear]. But, even should that be the case, we have all confidence in the prudence and the integrity of our brethren in the island; we have all confidence in the wisdom and the fortitude of our officers and our committee, chosen by the free suffrages of their brethren at home; and most of all we have confidence in the overruling providence of Him who has ever been with us—that He will "cause the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder will He restrain" [cheers]. It is impossible for me to recal the past, in connection with that society for which I once undertook a journey to the north of England, and in the committee-room of which I met the late respected and beloved secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, without instituting a comparison between that body and the one with which I now have the honour to be connected, and for which I am permitted to plead. That society reckoned among its patrons the prelates and the highest nobles of our land; nor will it be soon forgotten that the chair, which is so ably occupied on this occasion, was filled, on the occasion of the public birth of that society, by the husband of the Queen of the British empire. We have no aristocracy with us; we acknowledge no aristocracy but that of liberality, and devotedness to the cause of Jesus Christ [cheers]. The funds of that institution were in proportion to its magnitude. Its supporters not only obtained large private contributions, but they were also privileged to unlock the Treasury of England, and £60,000 were granted for the Niger expedition. I believe, Sir, that your annual income must be three times repeated before it will equal that sum. That institution seemed to proceed on principles of the most prudent character; it seemed to proceed upon the principles of a wise, cautious, and observing benevolence. The slave trade, instead of being in any-wise diminished by all the efforts which Great Britain has made in connection with the other monarchies of Europe, is at this moment more extended and dire in its character and operation than it has been at any previous period. Because of our efforts, it is necessary that vessels of a particular character should be constructed, so that they may sail rapidly and outstrip the pursuit of our cruisers; and the meeting will hear with grief and horror that the swiftest vessels employed in this trade are known by the name of Baltimore clippers, and are built in the United States of America [hear, hear]. It was found that not only had the traders a deep interest in the traffic which gave them so large a profit, but the African monarchs themselves endeavoured to sustain it. A taste had been excited in their minds for European commodities. They had nothing to barter for our cargoes but the slaves which they had taken in war; and it occurred to the minds of many in this country, that if we could furnish the African princes with our manufactures and goods in exchange for whatever they were able to offer—and there is evidence that Africa yields all the luxuries of a tropical character—we should thus take away from the African princes the stimulus which, in the manner I have described, led them to promote the slave trade, and thereby to a great extent diminish the system. These were principles which commended themselves to men who had long studied the subject, and upon these principles did that society proceed. But the principles of our society are principles which cannot but commend themselves to every calm and reflecting mind. They are principles not only simple, but sublime in their simplicity; yet they are such as the man of the world would be disposed to scorn: for to him would it not appear a strange and incredible thing that we should hope to terminate the very slave trade itself by the preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Let us now look at the result. The Niger expedition sailed. It had on board agriculturists and botanists; but, though there was a foreign chaplain, there were no missionaries in any of the three vessels that constituted it. It took out medicines, seeds, implements, and machines; but it did not take out the word which alone is "able to make wise unto salvation." Nevertheless, it went with the good will of the English community; and many a heart was disposed to believe, "Now is the time of Africa's regeneration come." But, from the moment when those vessels left this country until the time of their return, disappointment seemed to sit upon their shrouds, and death to dog them through their entire course; and now that expedition is never heard of without the term "ill-fated" being connected with it. Let us look at the operations of our own society just on the point of Western Africa: we have had our hearts thrilled by the statement that a church of Jesus Christ has already been formed in Fernando Po; Clarence has already acknowledged Jesus; King Aqua has heard of Him, and King Bel has permitted the Gospel to

be preached even in his town. May we not, then, well believe that operations so auspiciously begun shall continue to prosper under the glorious head of the church, and that, by the operations of our missionaries, as a collateral good, shall the slave-trade be driven at last from the mouth of the Niger. Men were formerly disposed to smile at our efforts. Doubtless Mr Pitt would have smiled had he been told that Carey, the dissenting minister, who went to India from the midland counties, would produce a moral revolution in that part of the world [hear, hear]. Mr Fox would have smiled had he been told that the missionaries to the West Indies would succeed in giving to those islands a free peasantry, when his own eloquence fell without effect in the house in which he spoke. But if Christianity has done so much in the East and in the West, is it enthusiasm to say that it will yet overcome the monster evil under which Africa groans, and drive the slave-trade from its shores? [cheers.] And why do I draw this comparison? Is it because I think that all the prudence, skill, and energy are with us, or that we stand in a position to be admired? I trust the most blinded depravity will draw no such conclusion. It is that we may feel this day, and that we may ever act under the influence of the conviction, that in these things man is nothing, but God is all [cheers]. If this work were to be accomplished by human might or wisdom, it would have been effected by those who have been driven away, baffled in the attempt; but because "it is not by might or by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," therefore will the missionary succeed where a whole government agency would fail [cheers]. We must remember, my friends, that in this mission to Western Africa we have competitors [hear, hear]. We must recollect that the churches of Asia look upon Africa as their own peculiar spot, to be conquered for their Lord. They hear its moans, and they can give no rest to their eyes till they have done something to pour the balm of consolation into its wounds. The churches of Jamaica have helped to furnish us with means to carry out our object. I believe I am right in stating that they have given about £500 a year for this purpose [hear, hear]. The churches of Jamaica have also furnished us with men. Oh, that was a day to be remembered in the annals of missionary labour when *The Chilmark* sailed from Jamaica! There was that Clarke whom even the heathen pronounced to be the man of God, whom we, with our knowledge of his character, still more emphatically would pronounce the man of God; and with him were those men and women who were ready to devote their lives if they might by any energies of theirs but win one soul of the wretched Africans to the Lord their Saviour [cheers]; and well was that vessel piloted. No rude hand guided her helm or stretched her sails to the breeze. She was piloted by him whose name is imperishably connected with the emancipation of our fellow-creatures, by him whose heart is not more ready to dilate in war than to melt in peace—the very David of our host, the illustrious Knibb [cheers]. And is there one in this audience who, remembering that *The Chilmark* may be still upon the ocean will not adopt with regard to it the language of the poet,—

"Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave  
Impel the ship whose errand is to save.  
May nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen, impede  
The bark that ploughs the deep serene,  
That flies, like lightning swift at God's command,  
A herald of God's love to Afric's land."

I must draw this address to a close. But let me first say, with respect to our brethren in the West Indies, that they have already done much in sending the Gospel to the destitute St Elizabeth and Clarendon. When Washington Christian went from Toronto to entreat aid on behalf of their brethren in the slave states, they subscribed liberally. There was a painful hurricane which swept over Antigua, and destroyed the chapel of Poulter Grove. Our brethren immediately raised £231. This is union not in word only but in deed; and we would say to those who speak most loudly in this place on that topic which is so frequently handled, when they hear that the Baptist missionaries of Jamaica have called upon their churches to assist the Wesleyans in rebuilding their chapels, "Go ye and do likewise" [cheers]. The difficulties of our brethren are great, but these facts prove that they are possessed of right principles; and if we do not rouse ourselves, if we do not increase our exertions, if we do not increase our subscriptions, the children will soon outstrip their parents, and we shall lag behind, ashamed at our deficiencies [hear, hear]. There is one other conclusion which I would draw before I sit down. It is this, that the whole heart of Christian England should rejoice on learning that the churches in the West Indies are bearing so richly the fruits of righteousness and peace [cheers]. And I know not that joy should diffuse itself in any hearts so sweetly as in those which once feared that the tide of prosperity with which our God had there favoured us should lead us on to some point from which we would gladly retreat [hear, hear]. Not only shall we rejoice in these evidences of the integrity of our Christianity in our Jamaica churches, but I trust that those also who were the first to express their fears will now be the first to come forward and say, "Brethren, we were mistaken, and we rejoice that we were mistaken; we rejoice to know that that fold into which we feared that Satan had entered has been preserved by the Spirit of the most high God, and that the Jamaica churches in their missionary exertions will bear comparison with any churches of equal wealth and of equal numbers in our own land [cheers]. With these observations, I beg to move the resolution.



JOSEPH TRITTON, Esq., in seconding the resolution, said: I will not apologise for rising to perform the duty I have undertaken to discharge this morning, though I might, perhaps, with perfect truth, appeal to the secretary to inform you that I was entirely willing, not to say desirous, that the seconding of this resolution should be confided to abler and better hands than my own. The fact is, that I did go to him, and I told him that, with such a goodly staff of speakers as I was assured he would have at this meeting, he might very well dispense with any humble services which I could render. The only answer, however, which I could obtain was a kind of ambiguous compliment, that though he had a goodly staff, yet, if I refused to speak, he should have no handle [laughter]. Under these circumstances I can only hope that the strength of the former may not suffer from the weakness of the latter; but that both staff and handle, fully sympathising with each other, may receive equal sympathy at your hands. We are told that in one of the islands of the South Seas there is a certain road bearing the familiar title of "The Parent Path." Beneath the shade of its luxuriant avenues the simple-hearted islanders are accustomed to raise seats of stone to the memory of their ancestors, to which they point the attention of visitors, and say, with pride, "Here our fathers sat." Methinks this society has also its parent path, hallowed by the memories of our spiritual predecessors, and rich, indeed, not in monuments of perishable stone, but in memorials far more noble; memorials whose brightness time cannot tarnish, and the influences of decay shall never destroy. To take but one step in a path so pleasant; to add but one tribute to those to whom, as a society, we are so deeply indebted; to pay but one act of homage to the principles which they professed, principles which we conscientiously believe to be founded on truth, were an honour and an enjoyment of which we feel ourselves unworthy. But who would be unwilling to stand in the footprints of those—the good, the pious, and the sainted of other days—who from this platform have advocated the missionary cause with no little success, and, while here invoking a blessing on their brethren, have themselves received their brethren's blessing? A high authority has truly said, that "when it goeth well with the righteous the city rejoiceth." And as one who, I trust, may lay claim not only to the title, but the privileges of Christian citizenship, permit me in passing to offer one or two congratulatory remarks in addition to those which have already been made: for surely it hath gone well with our society during another year; and, looking at its general position, an expression of lively but humble gratitude—of meek but unshaken confidence—will neither be deemed unseasonable nor misplaced. We do not stand this morning, as a noble poet of our country tells us he once stood, upon the Bridge of Sighs, indulging in those vain recollections and melancholy regrets which the scene around him was calculated to inspire; but we, sir—if I may use a form of expression even more figurative still—we seem to be standing on a bridge of smiles. On the one hand is the stream of years departed—covered, it is true, with the fragments of desolation and of death it has worked or gathered in its way, and darkened far too often by the nature of the things it bears on its bosom or that of the soil over which it has swept along,—yet is there not reflected on its depths a heavenly radiance, wherever, to bless and beautify the world, the light of eternal truth had scattered its sacred beams? Again, on the other hand, see the rapid stream of future generations and coming events, over which long years are expanding their cloudy wings; but follow that stream through all its mazes; trace it home, with the eye of enlightened faith, to the boundless ocean, where all its shifting currents are lost for ever; see how pure a lustre gradually brightens on its flow, till, with splendour and glory indelible, the eternal sunrise crimson the repose of its last wild wave. It is not for us to say what share of success may in after years attend the labours of those missionaries who are immediately connected with our own institution; but this, I think, I may safely affirm, that, if enriched with the influences of the Holy Spirit, they still continued to employ the same simple and scriptural means which they have employed hitherto, although they may not enjoy a monopoly, they will undoubtedly have a fair proportion of those who will swell the number of the church on earth, and be their joy and crowns of rejoicing in the day of the Lord. While, however, there is much ground for holy exultation in the recollections of the past and in the anticipations of the future, there appears to me to be circumstances connected with the present which demand the expression of sympathies and emotions of another class. We cannot, my Christian friends, contemplate the ruins of humanity with the feelings with which we sometimes gaze on the relics of artificial or natural objects of another description. Place us, for instance, within the range of some hoary, dilapidated, timeworn building; while we survey its turreted walls and its unpeopled chambers, we are almost ready to bless the hand that wrought its overthrow, and the years that have crowned its seats with decay, because we deem it even more fraught with interest in the wreck of its splendour than when, stately and commanding, it shed its influence on the scene around; its present silence seems more expressive than the traces of those joyous voices which once rang through its corridors or echoed from its dome [cheers]. But far be it from us to look with anything like indifference, much less with interest, on a ruin so fearful as that of unregenerate man. Once reflecting, in some measure, the inimitable attributes of Him after whose image he was formed—happy, holy, innocent, with a heart pure as the river that went out of

Eden, and peaceful as the scenes in which he moved, but now corrupt, blighted, defaced—the dignity of his character is gone, and the impress of divinity tarnished and eclipsed, if not destroyed. "Would," we are ready to exclaim, as we look from that which once was to that which now is—"would that the noble fabric had been permitted to stand unshaken in its moral and spiritual perfections; would that the heavenly inhabitant, whose smile once brightened, and whose presence once adorned it, had never been driven from his desecrated temple, and compelled to quit his prostrate throne; and would that those songs of innocence and praise, which ages have silenced, still rose to the listening heavens in all their primeval simplicity and joy!" Aspirations such as these have not been hitherto breathed in vain; for thousands of convicted souls attest their fulfilment, and multitudes more, down-trodden and debased though they be—multitudes more, whatever their race, and wherever their dwelling—shall come forward and bear witness to the same great fact [cheers]. Even reason, finite though it be—even reason, as it contemplates the evident justice and benevolence of the great Architect of all—can here venture to argue, and for once correctly: that if it hath pleased Him to devise and propound a scheme for rescuing from ruin his fallen creatures, in addition to the wisdom displayed in its conception, it would be executed on a scale of vast and unbounded extent, every way worthy of Himself [cheers]. To this revelation adds its unquestionable testimony, when it assures the rejoicing church, rejoicing amid present sorrows in the hope of future triumphs, that "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea" [cheers]. But where, my friends, are we to look for the commencement of this great change? Where shall we turn to discover its secret source? Not to the world—its camps, its councils, or its senates; not to the mighty enterprises of civilisation, or the schemes of merely human philanthropy, one of which has been called to our attention, praiseworthy though they be. "No, sir; the first step in the promotion of this great change is taken in the solitude of the Christian's closet, when the voice of wonted supplication rises with increased fervour for the world's conversion to God. That voice soon finds an echo in the great congregation, and those sounds share the feelings and adopt the language of the more lonely pleader [cheers]. Nor rests it even there. It is borne on the wings of the morning, it is wafted by the evening breeze; the universal church of Christ has given it a deep response, and again and again are its accents repeated as the scattered yet united family make this appeal to a Father's faithfulness and love, "Let thy way be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations" [applause]. Efforts follow entreaties; prayer is embodied in action; exertions prove the vitality those holy breathings indicated, and the mercy that was sought in the one sheds a benignant smile to hallow the other [cheers]. But who is destined to be the har-binger, who the herald of a change so blessed? Experience, rich in accumulated facts; observation, keen and penetrating in its reasons and results; and scripture, no less conclusive in its predictions than clear in its precepts; seem to say, as it were, to the Christian missionary, "Thou art the man; thou, who from European shores, or those where the pilgrim fathers rested their weary footsteps, having girded thyself to the noble enterprise, hast gone forth to far distant islands; and thou, too, exulting Africa, whom winds and waves are bearing back from the scenes of thy earlier sorrows and of thy later joys to the land that still shelters the remnant of thy race, and the soil that has sepulchred the ashes of thy fathers" [cheers]. In the pagan east, of which I presume we are presently to hear, though comparatively little impression seems to have been made on its dark and benighted multitudes, yet what little spiritual life and happiness and peace they have are owing to the labours of such men as Martin, Carey, Morison, Pearce, and others of the same class, one of whom it is our privilege to behold on this platform [cheers]. Have not these men given the first impetus to the glad tidings of redemption, which, as they roll on in after years, shall not only proceed with accumulated rapidity, but will gather in their course accumulated spoils? [cheers.] On changing the figure, have they not, standing on the hill of Zion, loosened and set in motion a mighty avalanche, which, however insignificant it might appear when it first broke away from the height, shall gradually increase and wax greater and greater in its onward career, till, majestic in magnitude, and resplendent in purity, it covers the whole surface of the outstretched plain? [cheers.] Look, again, to the north, whose very barriers have yielded to the stern resolution and holy courage of our Moravian brethren, and whose hardy sons, shrouded in a midnight even more gloomy than that which encompasses their dwellings with almost perpetual darkness, have yielded to the missionary seals for his ministry and souls for his hire. To these the southern breezes bear another and a grateful tribute, for what though they may have risen where the servant of Jesus fell—what though they may have swept over the scene of his, to us, untimely martyrdom, they have told us of triumphs far higher and more noble than the savage ever achieved by the flight of his poisoned arrow or the blow of the deadly club. Is the west, to which my resolution has special reference—is the west utterly destitute of that joy and peace and glory, the first fruits of those more extended blessings of which the missionary of the cross is the honoured instrument? Methinks ten thousand voices shout their emphatic No! He it was who pleaded our cause—he it was who helped to redress our wrongs;

and, better far, he kindled in our midst the light of life [cheers.] The subject alluded to in the resolution clearly proves the value which our Wesleyan brethren set upon the missionary brethren, a value, be it observed, which they are well able, from personal experience, to appreciate. The co-operation of which it speaks is at once a tribute to their gratitude—a noble testimony to the successful result of labours such as those in which we are now engaged. Here we see the result of many a prayerful vigil—many an anxious toil. Here the church has an acknowledgment of her supplications—the world an additional warning of Gospel truth. Here, ye profane, is an answer to your cavils. Here, fellow-Christians, is a ground for your future prospects. To you, also, Ethiopia stretches out her hands; and, while she asks from her children the debt of affection, she appeals to you for that of justice. Still may the co-operation of which this resolution makes mention be continued—still may we unite with the children in bringing the Gospel to their fathers' homes, those homes

"Whose every name in exile heard could dart  
Ice through their veins, and lightning through their heart."

[cheers.]

You will also observe that the resolution speaks of pecuniary difficulties. Strange things these pecuniary difficulties [laughter]. They must surely be endowed with omnipresence, for, go where you will, listen to whom we may, here are these identical pecuniary difficulties. Now, we sometimes hear of these pecuniary difficulties at the other end of London as well as at this; and I will tell you the course which those in the business I follow adopt. If a customer comes with a long face and heavy heart and a faltering tongue, and tells us he is in pecuniary difficulties, two leading questions are before the mind—shall we bring the man through, or let him stop, whatever the consequence? If we believe the man to be upright and honest, we resolve to adopt the alternative, to carry him through; and I could point you to many a house in the metropolis now as fair in fame, as prosperous in business as any other, who have, in their hour of need, received what we technically term a little accommodation [laughter and cheers]. Now, the African missionary comes to you something like the customer comes to his banker. If you believe them worthy of your continued support and confidence, then I appeal to you to adopt the alternative which we should adopt in a similar case. But I would, at the risk of incurring a charge of presumption, ask you to bear in mind that money alone will not repay the debt we owe to Africa. She asks us not only to give her of our silver and our gold—that methinks is a small request, considering the thousands we have drained from the life blood of her sons—she appeals to us to send to her shores the word of life—a glorious beacon that shall guide her children through all their wanderings, and an inexhaustible treasure in the possession of which, however weak, yet she shall be strong, and, however poor, be rich indeed [cheers]. She appeals to us to send from the bosom of our churches Christian missionaries, who shall stand on her coasts and unfurl the banner of that Redeemer's love, and shall be instrumental in bringing her children to the light of truth. She crowns all by imploring us to send forth a hearty and a fervent prayer that the chains of sin may be broken, and the days of her mourning for ever ended. Brethren,

"Do something, do it soon with all your might;  
An angel's wing would droop if long at rest,  
And God himself, inactive, were no longer blest."

—[loud cheers.]

Mr. J. SPRIGG rose to move,

"That the thanks of the society are due, and are hereby presented to the Bible Translation Society, to the American and Foreign Bible Society, and to the various friends who have aided the translations executed by the brethren in Calcutta; and that our brethren be assured of the cordial support and sympathy of this meeting amid the difficulties and toils of their honourable and important work."

I would sympathize with all that has been said on the great value of a preached Gospel. I would go with every word that has been uttered as to its being that instrument that is to take the lead of all other agency in the situation of the souls of men. But, at the same time, I must be allowed to say, looking at the resolution I have read, that there is another agency that may well be mentioned, even in union with the preaching of the Gospel itself. I mean that which consists in giving to the nations of the earth the wonderful works of God in their own tongue; and it is to efforts of this kind that the resolution I have read specially refers. There are some peculiar advantages which the printed word of God possesses wherever it goes; and not a mean one either is, that it can always be had access to, that it can accompany man at all times, in all his changing circumstances; nor can I doubt that in this respect the hundreds, the thousands of the sacred volume that have been distributed from our missionary press have been the means of affording instruction, pouring consolation into the wounded heart, and winning triumphs which we shall only know when we have entered into the presence of God above. Is it to be imagined that all the volumes of which we have heard nothing, is it to be supposed that the hundreds and thousands of books distributed at the various festivities, and to congregations of idolaters for very different purposes, have all fallen without effect, and without winning souls to the Saviour? May we not rather believe, and from what we know are we not authorised to believe, that in many instances they have been carried to parts of India where no missionary's foot has yet trodden, won trophies to the Redeemer in villages and towns the names of which have never been known to the do-



nors? [hear, hear.] If there be peculiar value in translating the word of God into the various languages of the earth, on account of the possibility of its being borne hither and thither, accompanying man in all the changes of life, amidst the infirmities of age, and in the hour of death, is there not also a peculiar value in the very perpetuity that is stamped upon that work? In the work of translation we have a value that cannot be reached in the preaching of the Gospel. A man rises to preach the Gospel; he has to commence for himself, to beat out his own path—of course we are speaking under the recollection of Divine guidance and influence—but he has to fashion his own style of preaching; he cannot use up the benefit he could get from the expressions of a dying missionary that is just leaving the world. But it is not so in the work of translation. The successor enters into the benefits of the labours of the predecessor. If the first version into any language be, and we may readily suppose it to be, comparatively rude, at least it will have many errors, from which a more lengthened acquaintance with the language might have saved it; yet let it be remembered that the second takes it up just at the point prepared to his hand, and he starts pretty nearly from the point where his predecessor stopped [hear, hear]. This gives the translation an almost indescribable value in the missionary field, and we want but one other thing, and that is the amazing, the irresistible power that ever has accompanied it. We are authorised, by the word of Him who gave it, to conclude that a blessing will accompany the word of God when given to the ruined souls of men. I can easily imagine that when the first volume of the Scriptures was translated into any dialect of the east, that when the first volume issued from the missionary press, the uninstructed heathen might attach very little more importance to it than did the dreamer in the Midianitish camp when he saw the oaten cake fall; but as in that so in ours, there were interpreters who understood what it was, the character of the work begun, and to what a glorious termination it would certainly advance. I can believe that through the hosts of darkness there was a tremor of dread, an emotion of dismay when they saw in that fact only the launching of the thunderbolt of heaven, the rapidity of whose transit should never be checked, and the might of whose powers should never be diminished till the last wall of the last idol temple had fallen prostrate [cheers]. I can readily suppose, passing from one world to another, that the glorified spirits around the throne beheld in the first version a part of those beams of mercy and compassionate light which they knew should increase in intensity, and vigour, and brightness, until the last human soul of those hitherto darkened regions had entered into the wondrous truths connected with the redemption of mankind. Then, if this be a correct view of translations, surely the meeting will cordially unite in presenting thanks to a society that enables our brethren to carry on, from time to time, this great and mighty work. What a delightful thought it is that one of these societies may be said to have arisen from the other! It was the operations of the Missionary Society that directed attention to the importance of providing means by which a faithful translation of the word of God shall be given to the heathen. I am delighted that there comes another continent to our help. I will not dwell upon it—all I have to say of America is that I trust, I pray, I agonize that the deep blot of slavery may speedily be removed for ever [loud cheers]. The resolution, however, assures our brethren of our sympathies, amid their difficult and their honourable engagements. In this part of the resolution, if we are sincere in our expression, we shall feel the strong, the irresistible appeal to bear these men upon our hearts, when we are allowed to hold communion with God. It is here that our sympathies can be expressed in such a manner that they shall come down in enlarged blessings upon their heads—increased light upon their minds—in strains of consolation to their hearts, and growing efficiency in all the labours they shall perform. They have difficulties to contend with, of which we can scarcely form an adequate conception; but I am ready to think that if our brethren were placed before us they would say, "Talk not of difficulties, talk not of anything that can mingle sorrow with the joy that our efforts ought to excite in every Christian bosom" [hear]. What shall we say of the success that has attended our missionary exertions in various parts of the world? We would only remind you that they have broken the caste of Judea; they have brought the proud Brahmin to deep humility, and in a right mind to sit at the feet of Jesus; they have elevated the down-trodden ones of lower caste, to enjoy all the happiness and delight that religion can give to the mind. They have broken the chain of the slave. Missionary brethren have been mainly instrumental in effecting emancipation; missionary efforts have gone to the South Seas, and put an end to the evils inflicted by parents on their children and tribe against tribe in those islands; and now already are we permitted to take our stand on the shores of Africa, and behold the Missionary Society the instrument which shall put a stop for ever to that tremendous curse to the human race that we denominate slavery [cheers]. Let it also be added, without any reference to the character of the events that have accompanied it, that the door of the church is open, that already missionaries are treading all that country, and have gained access to the inhabitants of that part of the world. We may be said to stand in an elevated position to-day, and to see all around, I trust, the brightest intimations of the coming forth of the Sun of Righteousness, who at last shall arise in his strength, and illumine the whole race of man.

The CHAIRMAN then announced

Dr. WILSON, of Bombay, missionary of the Free Church of Scotland. He said—I am glad you have characterised me as a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland. The first gentleman who addressed the meeting alluded to me as a missionary of the Church of Scotland. I am not a missionary of the Church of Scotland as established, I should say formed, by law, and which has enjoyed the shield of the state, being decently and comfortably nailed to it as a cherry-tree is to the wall [laughter]. But I am a member, a minister, and a missionary of that Church of Scotland the principles of which were supported by the martyrs, and by the confessors and the worthies of Scotland—that church which lives in the prayerful faith of the people of Scotland—that church the emblem of which is the banyan-tree of India standing forth in peerless majesty, and sending forth its branches to the ends of the earth, which branches, like the churches planted by this society, themselves take root and become mighty trees [cheers]. But though I am a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, I most heartily rejoice in the opportunity now presented to me of saluting you and your great institution in the name of the Lord [hear, hear]. This institution has had an honourable place in the history of modern missions. It was from its foundation that the grand revival of missionary zeal visited the church of Christ in general. This institution was honoured of God to send forth to India the pioneers of all Protestant missionaries—men mighty in the faith, and powerful in the Holy Ghost, and who have been honoured greatly by the Lord and head of the church [cheers]. I admired these missionaries in my youthful, I had almost said infantile, days. From the earliest period I was accustomed to read the transactions of this society. The names of Carey, and of Marshman, and of Ward, had been long familiar to me before I had finished my studies at the university. Dr. Marshman gave me the right hand of fellowship before I proceeded to India, and he was among the first with a generous heart to welcome me to the shores of India as soon as I arrived [cheers]. But though I admired these devoted servants of the Lord before I went to India, I still more admired them and honoured them after I was able from my residence there to form something like an estimate of the great achievements which under God they have been instrumental in accomplishing. They went forth to India, but our countrymen were almost ashamed of them when they landed on the shores of that great continent. The shield of England was not held over them to protect them in their great work. They persevered, however, in well-doing, and by their meekness, by their wisdom, and by their Christian devotedness, they gained the approbation and support of the great majority of our countrymen resident in India. This is a circumstance ever worthy to be noticed. They were first to engage in the great work of the translation of the Scriptures into different languages of India. Their doings in this respect have been so great that it is scarcely possible rightly to estimate and rightly to characterise them. It is true that the translations which they made were but imperfect, but it is true also, as has been already stated by a preceding speaker, that those translations came into the hands of their successors, and have formed the groundwork of those operations which are now going on, and which I trust will speedily arrive at perfection. These men were privileged to institute and to support schools for the education of Indian youth; and into these schools they introduced the scriptures of truth, "which are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." They entertained the idea of founding colleges for the education of the sons of India for the Christian ministry, and powerfully did they plead for that institution, and prominently did they bring before the public the grand idea that, if we expected India to be Christianized, we must have the co-operation of its own version the work of its evangelization; they preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in public and in private; they were instrumental in founding Christian churches; they lifted up their voice against the toleration of suttee by the British Government; they were loud in their protest against the continuance of idolatry; they were honourable members of learned and scientific societies, and they were instrumental in the formation of various philanthropic institutions which still exist, and which exercise a very beneficial effect over the population more immediately connected with them. On all these and many other accounts they are worthy of our honour. There are a great many now in the missionary field, and, though there may be thirty, yet I have no hesitation in saying, all things considered, they do not attain to the first three [hear, hear]. I rejoice that your missions in India are extensive. I trust there will be no proposition to reduce the missionaries on the plains of Bengal; I trust you will anxiously use what means you have in your power to increase the number of the heralds of the Gospel in that wondrous region. The valley of the Ganges in reference to population is one of the most important places in the whole world. I am almost ashamed before such a society as this to allude to the claims of India; but you will pardon me if I do allude to those claims. Its population is vast, and it is scattered over a great extent of country. The baron, in his account of the British Empire in the East, has estimated the population in the east at two hundred millions of souls. If we include the provinces on the banks of the Indus, and they are to be included (for it is from thence that India derives its name), this number will be found to be not far from being correct. It is the asylum of the greatest system of error which exists or ever has

existed in the world. Reference has been made this day to the delusions which are countenanced by our Government in the island of Ceylon. These delusions are connected with the Buddhist's system of religion—this system of faith is professed by the inhabitants of Tartary, of Chinese Tartary, of Siam, of Pegu, of Burmah, Ceylon, and Nepal. The native country of this religion is India. It is the holy land of the pilgrims of Buddha. All the sacred books are written in the Sanscrit language [hear, hear], or the one from which that language was formed by an artificial rule. This system of religion is so unholy in its character, that by many able orientalists acquainted with those books it has been declared to be atheistical. Most certainly it does not admit of a superintending providence. It represents the supreme spirit as existing in a state of absolute quiescence. It speaks of other fine spirits having proceeded from the original spirit, but these also it represents as existing in a state of quiescence. It maintains that man, by meditation and by the performance of ceremonies, can arrive at the very property possessed by the Holy Spirit. The most honoured objects of worship of the Buddhists are the broken tooth or some corporeal fragments of the seven last Buddhas which have appeared in this world. It is these relics which are protected by our soldiery; it is the service of these bagatelles that is honoured by the countenance of this great country [hear, hear]. I believe that the countenance of Buddha worship in Ceylon has only to be stated to the authorities at home, particularly to the Secretary for the Colonies, to be altogether withdrawn. I could not conceive a more desirable arrangement than that some of the gentlemen connected with this society should wait upon our Colonial Secretary, and represent to him the evils of the case. But I pass on. Worse than the Buddhist religion—even the worst which has been devised by the corrupt heart of man under the instigation and under the inspiration of Satan, the enemy of souls, and the enemy of God—is the Brahminical religion, which has been long dominant in India. That religion is a vast and specious system of superstition. I am greatly afraid that at our missionary meetings we take far too easy a view of this gigantic power of iniquity. The Hindoo religion is essentially pantheistic. It maintains that there is only one Being that exists, and that is God; it maintains that the Divine Spirit is a person found in a state of absolute rest, and in so small dimensions that it cannot be penetrated by a needle's point—it maintains that after a lapse of ages, which I cannot express in our numerals, that that divine spirit becomes possessed of self-consciousness, and exclaims, "I am Brahma." At this time three qualities, truth, passion, and foulness, which are supposed to be inherent in the Divine Spirit, begin to be moved—the godhead begins to expand—all that we call the material universe is merely the expansion of God. The spirit of men, and the spirit of brutes, and the spirit of vegetables (for they are supposed to be possessed of spirits,) are merely emanations of a superior mind, as sparks from the fire or vapour from the ocean. The whole universe is represented as the godhead. This morning I copied from the Hindoo Shaster one or two passages, which I will read:—"Heaven is his (Brahma's) head, and the sun and moon are his eyes; space is his ears; the celebrated vedas are his speech; air is his breath; the world is his intellect, and the earth is his feet; for he is the soul of the whole universe." "A wise man, knowing God as perspicuously residing in all creatures, forsakes all idea of duality; being convinced that there is only one real existence, which is God." "That spiritual being acts always, and moves in heaven; preserves all material existence, as depending upon him; moves in space; resides in fire; walks on the earth; enters like a guest into sacrificial vessels; dwells in men, in gods, and in sacrifices; moves throughout the sky; seems to be borne in water as fishes, &c.; produced on earth as vegetables on the tops of mountains; as rivers, and also members of sacrifices; yet he is truly pure and great." The Veda says: "All that exists is indeed God, i.e., nothing bears true existence excepting God, and whatever we smell or taste is the Supreme Being." These are a few extracts from the Hindoo sacred writings. I have others in my hand. You will observe that this view of religion lays the axe to the root of an religion properly so called. While these are the dicta of the sacred Shaster, it must appear that any consciousness of responsibility on the part of man is not to be expected; in fact, it is expressly stated in the Hindoo Shasters, that any man may at any time view himself as God. "Every one, on having lost all self-consideration in consequence of being united with divine reflection, may speak as assuming to be the Supreme Being." "The soul is a portion of the Supreme Ruler; the relation is not that of master and servant, ruler and ruled, but as that of whole and part." I have spoken of the Hindoo religion as being pantheistic,—it is also polytheistic, inasmuch as it suggests or represents that every thing that exists is part of God. They say it is perfect and prominent—it recognises the works of nature as a specific development of the godhead, and it worships them as such. In consequence of this the Hindoos worship the sun, the moon, the stars, the great mountains, the wide-spreading valleys, the ocean, the rivers, and the lakes. In consequence of this they worship more particularly the Brahmins, whom they hold as having come from the superior parts of the godhead, while other men have come from the inferior parts. The office of the military class is to protect the Brahmin, and the office of the mercantile class to provide wealth for the Brahmin. The office of the Shoodras, who come from the feet of God, is to



render service to the Brahmin. But while the Hindoos worship the works of nature, they also worship what they believe to be the attributes of God. They believe there are many personifications of the divine attributes that are to be recognised and treated as a real existence. The Hindoos worship gods, whom they consider, like man, to be emanations from the Supreme Spirit. They are polytheistic, in the most comprehensive sense of the term. They are also idolaters—they worship the elements of nature, of which they suppose the world consists. They construct for themselves the idols of gold and silver and brass, and stone and wood and clay. They believe they have it in their power to summon the Divine Spirit into these idols after they are created, and after they have fashioned them according to the ideas they have of particular gods. There is a passage in the Shasters respecting the power they are supposed to possess:—"All the universe is under the power of the gods; the gods are subject to the power of the mantras; the mantras are under the power of the Brahmins: the Brahmins are, therefore, our gods." The Hindoos believe that the idol is the Omnipotent God; they believe that, God residing in their idols, these idols can hear and answer their requests. Such is a mere glance at the theology of the Hindoos. It was said by an illustrious person, connected with your communion (I mean the late Rev. Robert Hall), that "where there is a lax theology there is a lax morality" [hear, hear]. We find this particularly exemplified in the case of the Hindoos. There is not a single commandment of the decalogue which is duly respected by the Hindoo Shaster. After what I have said, I need say nothing respecting the first and second commandment. Taking the name of God in vain is quite common among the Hindoos. A man believes that he may be saved by accidentally taking the name of Vishnu on his dying bed. The holy days or festivals of the Hindoos are not days for holy rest and refreshment, but days for unbridled revelry and iniquity. During the holding of the Holi, or vernal festival of the Hindoos, obscenity is sanctioned by the Shaster. During the Divali, or the great autumnal festival, gambling is directly sanctioned. With regard to the preservation of life enjoined by God, the Hindoo Shaster in many cases recommends suicide. They recommend many to terminate their lives when they are involved in distress, or when they wish to make a quick transit to heaven. They recommend the widows to practise the rite of suttee. The poor widow is to offer herself as a sacrifice on the funeral pile along with the body of her husband. They tolerate infanticide in certain circumstances. With regard to licentiousness, they give no reverence to chastity. I shall not say a word upon that in this place, for there are things not to be spoken, or by name alluded to. With reference to the commandment with regard to the rite of property, it is written in the Hindoo Shasters that "a Brahman may, without hesitation, take the property of a shudra. He (the shudra) has indeed nothing of his own; his master may doubtless take his property" [hear, hear]. With regard to the eternal claims of truth, on which it has been said the value of the universe is founded, we find it thus written: "A giver of false evidence from a pious motive, even though he know the truth, shall not lose a seat in heaven." Such evidence men call divine speech. In the case of courtzanship, of marriage, of food eaten by cows, of food for sacrifices of benefit or protection accruing to a Brahman, there is no sin in an oath." These are specimens of Hindoo morality not characterized by me as an excited speaker, but characterized by the sacred books themselves from which I have literally translated the passages I have now read [cheers]. In India a great part of the people are devoted to the Mussulman religion. The Mussulman says that he receives Mahomet, notwithstanding his villainess, at least as the prophet of God; and they receive the Koran, notwithstanding all its licentiousness, as the book of God. In the west of India there are to be found in general the Parsees, who worship the elements of nature, the sun, the moon, and the stars; who suppose that light or fire is the essence of God. They worship angels and archangels, who are supposed to preside over the different departments of nature. In the forests of India; and among its mountains, there are millions of aborigines who worship the spirit of the forests, and the wild beasts who are supposed to tread them. In short, we have in India one of the greatest systems of superstition of which we can conceive. Satan has greatly triumphed in India: he has there brought dishonour on God to an inconceivable degree; he has there injured man—man in time and man in eternity. Our souls were filled with indignation when some of the preceding speakers alluded to West Indian bondage—to African slavery; but what is the slavery of the body when compared with the slavery of the immortal spirit? The more we consider India in its vast extent, the more do we feel its great claims to our benevolent regard. By a most wonderful providence it has been placed under the government of this Christian nation. The armies of Europe, when led by Alexander and Seleucus, were unable to enter India; but this little island in the Western Ocean now exercises sovereignty over the whole of that continent. India is subject to England, or is under its effective influence. From India we ourselves derive great advantage. A great many of our countrymen there find lucrative and honourable employment. Its commerce is the most profitable to this mercantile nation. About six millions per annum come in the shape of pensions to retired officers or dividends on Indian stock, and in various other ways; our obligations to that country are very great. It well becomes us to put the question, how can we acquit ourselves of this

obligation? "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" [cheers]. We know how to do good to India. A great and effectual door of usefulness has been opened for us in that country. The mountains have been brought low and the valleys have been exalted in India, that a highway may be prepared for our God. From the report, you have heard this day of the triumphs of redeeming love in India; and these triumphs are but an anticipation and foretaste of those more distinguished and extensive triumphs which are yet to be expected. Notwithstanding the alienation of India from God—notwithstanding the power of its ancient system of superstition—notwithstanding the power of caste—notwithstanding the influence of the Brahman—notwithstanding the apathy of the people—India is in the way of being Christianized. Through the circulation of the word of God, through the preaching of the Gospel, through Christian books and tracts and seminaries for learning, much knowledge is now diffusing itself among the people. During the fifteen years I resided in India, I observed great progress in the national mind of the people; and it is to this I refer as the most signal token, next to the conversion of the soul to God, as a blessing upon our labours. I believe the time will come, and is not far distant, when we shall hear that India is a nation and kingdom—has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ [cheers]. To India we may confidently say:—

"Thy night of sorrow long and drear has been,  
But now its noon is past, and morn is nigh.  
The Sun of righteousness o'er all thy land,  
Thy mountains grand, and valleys stretching wide,  
Shall life and healing graciously shed forth.  
Thy sons and daughters, quickened by his power,  
Anon shall rise, and on his glory gaze,  
And with the ecstasy of joy shall sing  
His wisdom, power, and grace, which know no bounds;  
And, guided by his light, shall run and walk,  
As saved from sin and woe to heaven's abode,  
Where God himself shall be their God for aye."

[Cheers].

Where God has been so signally dishonoured, I believe an altar will yet be erected—a high altar to the Divine praise; where Satan has signally triumphed, he will be most signally defeated [long-continued cheers].

The resolution was then put and carried; after which the collection was made.

Mr T. F. NEWMAN rose to move—

"That this meeting, while dwelling with satisfaction on the financial statement of the society, at the same time solemnly recognises the obligation which rests upon its members to make increased exertions, so as to enable the committee to meet the claims of old stations, and to carry on missionary work in those districts which are now within the sphere of the society's operations."

I most heartily concur in the terms and spirit of those references which have been made to the admirable report, to which it has been our privilege to listen this morning. I am never disposed to pay much court to men, or to address to them, especially if they be men of sense, the incense of flattery; but I never heard a report, the intelligence of whose sentiments, the evangelical character of whose spirit, and the simplicity of whose details, more fully and completely satisfied my heart [cheers]. There were one or two points in that report which have not, I think, been remarked on by preceding speakers, and which, therefore, I will, for a moment, touch on. I think a hope was expressed that, under the providence of God, the late affairs of Scinde would be over-ruled for the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no risk, I believe, in entertaining a confident hope of that kind. If we refer to the past history of God's providential dispensations in this lower world, we have numberless proofs that he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and that the remainder of that wrath he mercifully restrains. I hate war in every shape [cheers], and—

"War is a game—which, were their subjects wise,  
Kings would not play at."

But it may be, as it has often been, the case in the past history of nations, that their civil confusions, their intestinal grievances, their national passions, their bloody wars, have been mercifully over-ruled in preparing a way for the chariot of the everlasting gospel, scattering amidst these bleeding sons of men the leaves of that tree which are for the healing of the nations [cheers]. I verily believe that those amongst us, who shall live another twenty years, will have occasion to adore the workings of the providence of God, in connexion with the events which have occurred within the last two years in British history, and which are even occurring at the present moment [hear]. We see that China is open to the gospel. I do not presume to pronounce an opinion concerning the rights or the wrongs of the strife in which this country was recently engaged with that vast continent, but I simply refer to the fact that the Almighty, who is excellent in counsel and wonderful in working, has over-ruled these scenes of warfare and devastation to present to the Christian world this new department for Christian labour, and to call upon the members of the church of Christ in every section into which that church has hitherto been divided, to shake themselves from their lethargy, to arise and put on their strength, and to go forth, in dependence on his name, to assail the vast fortresses of superstition and sin, which there, under the assaults of the gospel of peace, shall sustain a fate similar to that which some of the material fortresses of China have already sustained beneath the thunder of British artillery. Our conquest, to be achieved in that far-distant and densely-populated land, is of a very different description to the triumph the British warrior has acquired—no scenes of carnage—no wallings of distress—no cities wrapped in flames—no thousands lying in their gore. As the gospel chariot advances—as Jesus, riding in it, progresses onward, conquering and to conquer—scenes of purity, and joy,

and blessedness shall spring up on every hand, and the anthem of those who are saved shall be re-echoed by the hallelujahs of the blest around the throne, because of the new accessions to Immanuel's empire, and these new accumulations of glory on his sacred head [cheers]. Reference was made to the patronage which the British government yet yielded, in some part of the world subject to British sway, to the system of superstition and idolatry. Our respected friend, the member of another section of the church of Christ, whose presence amongst us I hail with peculiar delight, the representative of the free church of Scotland [cheers]—oh! what a glorious title that is—I hope the men who have assumed that title will, with all their strength, and as with the heart of one man, resolve that it shall ever be the free church of Scotland—[cheers]—that no human patronage shall henceforth entangle its movements—that no human power shall be permitted to cripple its operations—that no impious connexion with the state shall ever—[tremendous cheers]—again cast a blight upon a cause so sacred, or interfere with movements so august, so sublime. This respected brother, with reference to the allusions that have been made to the patronage of idolatry by the British government, recommended an appeal to the colonial secretary. That is all very well, very proper, recognising the constitution of our country; and I hope that some members of our committee will, ere long, find their way to the colonial office, and there stand forth firmly to denounce this patronage, while, at the same time, they are the courteous advocates of the entire and eternal separation of British influence from all such scenes as these. But it struck me, while our friend was making these remarks, that something more is needed—what is it? It is just this, that the influence of vital Christianity shall be more extended at home; for never, till we get a Christian legislature, shall we get in every part of the world a Christian system of government. Depend upon it, my Christian friends, as the best means of securing the overthrow of idolatry, and of disseminating the British power from all the superstitions of the world, the diffusion of vital godliness at home, the extending of evangelical religion among our fellow-subjects, will be the most potent and most successful. We were reminded in the very admirable sermon of yesterday morning, from our friend Dr Campbell, that religious influence ascends from the lower to the higher walks of life, and I verily believe it [cheers]. When we have secured the predominating influence of evangelical principles among the commonalty of the realm, peers will follow, and the throne will become sanctified by the power of the gospel. In this way we shall be preserved from what now affects our eyes and grieves our hearts, when we see the influence of British authority, connected with such scenes as these [loud cheers].

Mr CALEB MORRIS seconded the resolution, which was put, and carried unanimously.

S. M. PETO, Esq., rose to move—

"That the cordial thanks of the society are due, and are hereby presented to the committee, to W. B. Gurney, Esq., and to the Rev. Joseph Angus, for the services they have severally rendered to the society in the management of its affairs during the past year; also to the auxiliary and juvenile societies for their successful efforts on behalf of the funds of the institution—efforts in which they are intreated to continue and abound."

From what I know of the Chairman, the Secretary, and the committee, I am sure that this resolution will meet with a warm response. But much as these gentlemen may esteem our commendation, they will much more esteem a pledge on the part of members of Christian churches and ministers of the gospel that, during the ensuing year, the flame shall burn brightly on that altar at which we meet once a month to offer up persevering and believing prayer on behalf of the society. If this resolve be carried out, as the arm of Moses was upheld and the Amalekites were defeated, so will the arm of the committee be upheld and the cause of truth triumph. It was when Elijah prayed to the Lord God of heaven that fire descended and consumed the altars of Baal. I trust that we shall pledge ourselves to pray for the society, and that we shall find at the close of another year that our prayers have not been in vain.

The resolution, which was seconded by Mr STEPHEN, of Newport, and supported by T. THOMPSON, Esq., was then put and carried by acclamation.

After which, Dr Cox pronounced the benediction, and the meeting separated.

#### BAPTIST UNION.

THE thirty-second annual session of this body was held at the Baptist Library, Moorgate street, under the presidency of Mr Robert Roff, of Cambridge. It was attended by 102 members and 53 visitors. The Union met on Thursday, April 18, at ten o'clock, when the report was read by Mr Secretary Hinton, and unanimously adopted, and ordered for circulation. The view which the Union took of the state of denominational affairs at home, as exhibited in the report, was expressed in the following resolutions:—

"1. That, while the Union learn with sincere gratitude, that the reported clear increase during the past year in 922 churches of the Baptist denomination in Great Britain and Ireland, has amounted to 5,246 members, affording reason to hope that, in the whole denomination (adopting the same ratio), there has been a clear increase within the year of about 9,000; they regard with regret the fact now elicited that the average increase of the year has been somewhat less than six members for each church, being the smallest rate of clear annual increase since 1838."

"2. That the Union, without listening to any suggestions of despondency, or yielding to any feelings of discouragement, would seriously commend this state of things to the prayerful consideration of the churches, and engage them to renewed exercises of watchful zeal and fervent supplication."

The report stated that sixty-two churches had, within the year, been added to the Union; and that the number it now comprehended was 923; also that twenty new churches had been formed in the denomination, and forty-two chapels erected or enlarged. The number of deceased ministers and missionaries reported was 19. Reference was made also to the gratifying completion of



the library (a commodious and elegant apartment in the new Mission house, 50 feet by 26) in which the Union was assembled; and the following resolutions on this subject were adopted:—

"That the Union regard with sincere gratification the completion of the spacious and commodious apartment in which the property of the Baptist library may henceforth be deposited; and take the present opportunity of soliciting from all who feel an interest in the formation of a denominational library, contributions towards its speedy enlargement and proper maintenance."

"2. That the care and management of the library for the ensuing year, be confided to the committee of the Union."

The report entered at large into the educational question, as it was left by the factories bill of last session; reciting the views which the committee had been led to adopt, and the earnest co-operation they had given to the British and Foreign School society at their late conference. On this subject the views of the Union were subsequently expressed in the following resolutions:—

"I. That the Union, unforgottenly rejoicing in the abandonment of the educational scheme, brought forward by the government in 1843, attach the highest importance to the universal instruction of the people, and feel themselves called upon, in common with all their fellow-citizens, vigorously to promote it."

"II. That the Union emphatically affirm the two principles embodied in the resolutions of their late Committee; maintaining, on the one hand, the adequacy of popular energies to the work of general education, with the injury and danger to be apprehended from the interference of government with it in any form—and on the other, the decided preference due to the system of co-operation with the friends of Scriptural education at large, over that of forming denominational schools."

"III. That the Union strongly recommend to all their constituents a prompt and zealous co-operation with the friends of Scriptural education in their respective neighbourhoods, in order to secure the adequate provision, and the effective management of schools on the British system."

"IV. That the Union rejoice in the recent effort made by the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society, to enlarge its resources and its operations; and that the liberal pecuniary support of it be recommended to the churches."

"V. That the Secretary be instructed, in forwarding the above resolutions to the British and Foreign School Society, to declare to the Committee of that valuable institution, in the most unequivocal manner, that, in the judgment of this Union, an entire and perfect freedom from all government interference whatever—but which can be legitimately enjoyed only in the absence of all pecuniary assistance on the part of government—is of the highest importance to the Society itself, while they are assured it is indispensable to the full confidence and cordial concurrence of the churches whom they represent."

The Report further stated that the foreign correspondence of the Union had, during the past year, been considerably enlarged; a statement which gave rise to the following expression of fraternal sentiment:—

"That the Union desire to record their high gratification that more copious information has been received than heretofore, from baptists in various parts of the world; that they take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging the interesting and important communications from their brethren, and of most cordially responding to the Christian sympathy therein, so warmly expressed."

The report concluded with a reference to the funds. By the Treasurer's audited account it appeared that the income had been nearly £125, the largest on the records of the Society; but that the costliness of the last report (which contained the amplest statistics of the denomination hitherto published), and the large quantity of general business, had created a heavy arrear, now amounting to £44 7s. 8d. Some special contributions were immediately tendered towards this deficiency.

Having sat (with a short interval for refreshment) till nearly six o'clock, the Union adjourned until Monday.

On the resumption of business on Monday morning, April 22nd, the subject of the parliamentary grant was brought forward by the Committee, and the following resolutions were, after a short discussion, carried by a large majority:—

"I. That the Union deem it their duty, at the present period, to express their disapprobation of the parliamentary grant annually made to necessitous protestant dissenting ministers in England and Wales; the reception of which they cannot but consider as rendering the partakers of it stipendiaries of the state, and as an unhappy and injurious inconsistency with the great principles of nonconformity."

"II. That, in order to free themselves from all implication in this inconsistency, and to contribute to its abandonment, there be presented, on behalf of this Union, first, a memorial to the government, and next, a petition to parliament, praying that the parliamentary grant may be discontinued."

"III. That this Union especially deplores that any portion of the government grant should be accepted for distribution among baptist ministers, and would respectfully, but earnestly, intreat those gentlemen who have hitherto acted as the government agents in this matter, forthwith to decline doing so, and thereby to relieve the baptist denomination from so just an occasion of reproach."

The subject of the Anti-state-church Conference was then introduced by Dr Cox, and, after a long and animated discussion, the following resolutions were carried, the former unanimously, and the latter by a considerable majority:—

"That, deeply convinced of the unscriptural character of national establishments of religion, as interfering with the sovereign authority of Christ in his church, of their baneful influence upon the interests of truth and piety, and of their tendency to corrupt conscience, to generate unholy animosities, to depreciate spirituality of mind, to substitute power for principle in the professed design of diffusing Christianity, and to sanction aggressions such as are continually made upon the peace and property of dissenters; and being further persuaded, from recent occurrences in relation to legislative intentions at home, and efforts made to extend the compulsory schemes abroad, that the unrighteous, unreasonable, and unchristian system is unchanged, and in its nature unchangeable—hereby declare that the separation of the church from the state by all peaceable and proper means is to be devoutly desired and diligently pursued by all who are anxious to advance the kingdom of Christ."

"II. That this meeting desires to give expression to these sentiments by requesting the Rev. F. A. Cox, D.D., LL.D., and the Rev. Charles Stovel, to attend the Anti-state-church Conference to be held at the end of the present month, as their representatives, and to take such part in the proceedings as they may deem conducive to the harmony and success of its deliberations."

Having again sat (with a short interval for refreshment) until nearly six o'clock, the Union adjourned until Wednesday afternoon.

At three o'clock on Wednesday, April 23rd, business was resumed, without, however, presenting any further matters of public interest.

The public meeting of the union was held on Thursday evening, at Devonshire square chapel, Bishopsgate street, at half-past six o'clock. The meeting was commenced with prayer by Mr Joseph Tyso, of Wallingford.

The CHAIRMAN spoke to the following effect:—This is a meeting of the Baptist Union. Both the terms are exceedingly significant and interesting—union, a baptist union. Where there is unity there ought to be union, and to the same extent. The want of union has often been laid hold of by infidel objectors to Christianity, and pleaded as a justification of their unbelief. It is not un-

common to hear them say, "Agree among yourselves as to the interpretation of the scriptures, and then present them to us for our acceptance." Not to say that the objection thus alleged against revealed religion may be retorted with great effect on those who make it, it evidently assumes much more than is really true. For, although there are differences among Christians on minor points, there is a general and almost universal agreement on those which are fundamental. And that there should be some disagreement on minor points is rather to be considered as a necessary consequence of the structure of the human mind than any fault in the exercise of its powers. So great is the influence of circumstances, and so various are the circumstances themselves by which the formation of opinion is affected, that it is next to impossible, if not absolutely so, that men should agree in all their interpretations of the sacred oracles. That which is most to be lamented, however, as giving the greatest force to this objection, is the spirit of animosity and the want of love too often found among professed Christians. While discussions in all other departments of science are, for the most part, very temperately conducted, those in which religion is concerned frequently display some of the most malignant passions. This is to be deeply deplored, and constitutes the real ground of reproach. And if this will apply generally to all denominations of Christians, it will apply with greater truth and force to any one denomination in particular. Among us, as one denomination of Christians, there ought to prevail, and we have reason for gratitude that to a good degree there does prevail, a spirit of union. Again, this is a baptist union. This designation also has its peculiar interest, not at any time of small amount, but at the present time of considerable amount. That portion of divine truth which it has been allotted to us to preserve pure and inviolate has its just relative importance. Not all truth is equally important; but all truth is important, and circumstances may give to a particular truth more especial importance. This is now the case with respect to the views we hold—I refer to our views as to the proper subjects of baptism, in connexion with the essentially personal nature of true religion. All religion is personal. If we were to define religion, we should say, it is voluntary submission to God—the submission of our understandings to God's truth, of our hearts to God's providences, of our wills to God's supremacy. If baptism be a part of religion, it also must be a voluntary and personal act—the act of one who can exercise intelligence, who can appreciate motive—in a word, of a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. This view of our peculiar tenet comes at the present time in direct antagonism with a system of error which is now prevalent, and threatens to become more extensively prevalent, in this country, and in other parts of the world. We are thus set for the defence of an important principle. Everything, therefore, which unites us must be of importance, and of a degree of importance proportionate to that of the peculiar truth which is entrusted to us for propagation; and hence we derive a peculiar interest in our present assembling together.

Mr J. H. HINTON, one of the secretaries, in giving an account of the position and proceedings of the Union, added to what has been stated in our account of the sessional meeting, an abstract of the foreign correspondence, which for want of room we defer till our next. Mr Hinton also entered at some length into the educational question, explaining the position taken by the Union, and enforcing general activity the more strongly since denominational exertions had been declined. He concluded by saying that the speakers who would follow him would be representatives of large portions of the baptist community. Mr Hardcastle, of Waterford, was secretary of the Irish Southern Association, Dr Davies, now president of Stepney college, would represent the baptists of British North America, and Mr Stephen, of Newport, the baptists of the principality.

Mr CHARLES HARDCASTLE said that the Irish Southern Association of baptist churches had existed only three years. There had been a similar association many years ago, but the decline of religion in the churches had nearly ruined them, and had quite destroyed the association. "Three or four years ago, some of us who felt our isolated position strove to revive it: for, with the exception of Clonmel, I have no baptist church nearer to me than sixty miles, and I have often gone two or three years without seeing the face of a baptist minister. Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that there was less life among the churches than could be desired. We thank God that we are in existence, and that he has been pleased in some measure to revive the churches and increase their numbers. Of the increase of the denomination in Ireland we cannot say great things. If not as large as in England in each church, it is perhaps nearly as large per cent. The churches are in course of constant diminution by emigration to Canada and the United States. Regard then kindly, dear brethren, your poor sister in the Emerald Isle, where, if any where, there exists an urgent necessity for effort that gospel truth should be conveyed precisely in the manner in which such churches as these alone can convey it."

Dr DAVIES spoke as follows:—It is as the representative of the baptists in British North America that I have consented to say a few words. In Nova Scotia the baptists are not only the most numerous religious body, but decidedly the most influential, and always influential for good. At this moment, the prime minister (in reality, although not in name) of that province, is a zealous baptist. Lord Vaulleland, in his published despatches, speaks of him as "the leading member of his government." Our brethren there have a large share in conducting public affairs, and they always plead for an equality of civil immunities. Affairs in that province are at the present time in a very critical position. If you hear through the papers that our brother is accused of being hostile to liberty, do not believe it. In relation to a public institution formerly called Horton, but now Acadia College, he and our brethren are brought into collision with a powerful party most falsely called liberal. In New Brunswick, also, the baptists are the most numerous of the religious bodies, and they have many public men; but they have not so much influence as in Nova Scotia. In Canada there is a very large body of baptists, and there are many churches not connected with the association. Six churches consist of coloured men. There are many slaves from the United States in Canada. In my own house I have more than once had the happiness of sheltering some of these runaways. They are said to amount to 16,000; but I think this is too large a number. Among them are formed six baptist churches. One or two of them are of great importance. One in the city of Toronto, and its pastor is Washington

Christian, who (as has been stated elsewhere) went to Jamaica for his chapel debt, and was most kindly assisted by the baptist churches there. There are also two churches of converted Roman Catholics, the fruits of a successful mission to the French, called the Swiss mission. The missionaries, however, are not all baptists. They come from Switzerland, and are supported partly from that country; partly also from what is obtained in Canada and the United States, and I may add in England—where one gentleman has taken on himself the support of two of the labourers. This has been going on for eight years, and during that period these two churches have been gathered, containing two hundred converts from popery. This mission is very successful, though its means are scanty. They avoid anything like parade. The spirit that animates them is peculiarly adopted to commend them to the esteem of all. There is also in Canada, a church of Indians, the aborigines of the country; and connected with it are persons from about half-a-dozen Indian tribes, who give the missionary good reason to think they are experimentally acquainted with Jesus Christ. I might mention also the Theological Institution which exists in Canada, containing thirteen students, and affording pleasing accounts of their progress and promise. Within the last five years there has been to Canada a large accession of valuable labourers from this country. Foremost amongst them is John Girdwood, deservedly esteemed by all. Mr Gilmour also is accomplishing great things in a large and extensive territory. His efforts have resulted in the formation of three churches, and of two congregations besides. There is also in Canada a weekly paper (the *Register*) which will soon be edited by our highly esteemed friend, Mr Cramp, now gone to Montreal, to occupy an important post (president of the Theological Institution). You may be asked to support this paper, and I beseech you give it your generous consideration. You have heard of the Baptist Union formed in Canada. Their session will come on in a month or two; and I trust their proceedings will be conducted in a spirit of love and vigour. There are many difficulties in the way, however; but I hope that next year you will, in consequence, have fuller statistics. They will not have all the things to do that you have. They will have no occasion, for example, to discuss the union of church and state, which does not exist there. But they will have to watch narrowly the efforts which are continually made to give to a sect, which I need not name, a predominant and exclusive influence, particularly in relation to public schools, or college education. I hope they will prove themselves not unworthy of the model they have attempted to copy.

Mr D. RHYS STEPHEN appeared as the representative of the Welsh baptists. The Welsh might be described as a nation of dissenters. The churches were very thinly attended, and only by the gentry (who were English) and their dependents. The people—the whole Welsh people—were dissenters. Mr Stephen spoke at considerable length on the proper view to be taken of the increase of the churches.

The meeting was then closed by the Chairman.

EVESHAM.—On Wednesday week the new independent chapel, Broadway, was opened by two sermons, that in the morning being preached by Mr J. A. James, of Birmingham, and that in the evening by Dr Raffles, of Liverpool. There were many parties from all the surrounding towns and villages assembled on the occasion, and the new edifice was crowded to excess at both services. The collections after the two services amounted to nearly £80.

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